

Revelation 5

Sunday, September 13, 2020

I. The Scroll (5:1-4)

II. The Slain (5:5-7)

III. The Songs (5:8-14)

We saw last week in Revelation chapter 4 the emphasis was the throne of God, as John the Beloved was raptured - taken up to heaven and given a glimpse of God's glory.

Here in chapter 5 we pick it up where we left off, from within that throne room; we hone in on a certain scroll that needs to be unsealed in order for the future to be finalized.

I. The Scroll (5:1-4)

¹ And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. ⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

A. What John saw (v. 1)

There in the right hand of the Father, seated on the throne, John sees a scroll, written on the inside and on the back, sealed with 7 seals.

Back then they used scrolls, not books, consisting of long strips of papyrus type paper, glued together, some of these scrolls were up to 30 feet in length.

There are different opinions, but some say they would usually write on both sides of the papyrus, with the important details of the document on the inside, and a summary of the inner contents on the outside.

What the scribe would do is begin writing the document; after a period of writing he would stop, roll the parchment enough to cover his words, and seal the scroll at that point with wax. Then he would resume writing again, roll the scroll, and add another seal. In this case, by the time it was finished, God would have sealed the scroll 7 times. As we continue through the book of Revelation, the scroll will be read a section at a time, after each seal is opened.

So John saw the Father with the 7 sealed scroll in his right hand; in v. 2 we discover that John saw a strong angel...which leads us to:

B. What John heard (v. 2)

Now, we're not sure how John knew this was a strong angel, perhaps He was buff/built – it may have been his appearance, or maybe it was his voice, he may have had a strong, loud, booming voice.

There are some teachers who believe this is the angel Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, whose name means, "Strength of God." So there's a chance John knew he was strong, because he knew it was Gabriel.

We can only speculate on how he knew this angel was strong...we don't know for sure, but we **can** be sure of what John heard - the angel asks a question posed to the entire universe, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and loose its seals?"

It's the title deed to the earth.

It's the real life transition of power and ownership.

It's the official beginning of the end where Jews and Gentiles will be saved and the world will be judged.

Not just anyone can unseal this scroll – just as with any transaction of property, it must be someone whose paid the price, it must be someone whose won the war, according to the law of the Lord it had to be a Kinsman Redeemer.

So the angel asks, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose it's seals?"

What John saw. What John heard and then:

C. What John realized (v. 3)

There was no one who was worthy.

John somehow knew the significance of the scroll – that this would be to finalize, the future. It meant the halt of hate, the end of evil, the defeat of the devil, it meant no more curse in the universe, it meant a permanent paradise, a place of perfect peace, the land of love forever and ever...and now John realized that there was no one, it wouldn't, it couldn't be done.

No one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth (alive or dead) no one was able to open the scroll, **or even look at it.**

D. What John did (v. 4)

One translation simply says that John, "wept and wept..."

The Greek word means "to mourn, to wail," it expresses a strong and unrestrained emotion. Picture uncontrollable crying, miserable mourning, due to a deep and penetrating pain. This was the emotional experience of John the Beloved...he was allowed to feel and sense absolute and eternal hopelessness.

No one was worthy to open and read the scroll, or look at it.

I. The Scroll (5:1-4)

II. The Slain (5:5-7)

⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." ⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

One of the elders then speaks to John - "Do not weep..."

"Behold" (look, check it out)

And then John heard the greatest words he or we have ever heard, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root and of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its 7 seals.

This is the original and ultimate Lion-King, and when I read this I couldn't help but wonder if this elder speaking to John was one of the Jewish elders, because he weaves in 2 wonderful OT prophecies (maybe even Judah himself)

A. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:8-10)

This is when Jacob/Israel was speaking his final words to his sons; he gathered them together, to bless them, to speak words over them regarding their future, and to Judah he says in vs. 8-10 (read).

Shiloh speaks of peace; the scepter speaks of rule; all the Jews understood this to be a prophecy that was Messianic, it was about the coming King.

And just as the lion is king of the jungle, the Messiah would one day come through the lineage of Judah, a descendant of David, to rule, roar, and reign over all.

B. The Root of David

The Greek word for root (*rhidza*) can actually refer to a shoot, or an offshoot, from a root, and also speak of an offspring.

If we take it at face value, we can see it both ways, that this Messiah is a descendant of David (the fruit of David), but He's also the root of David, in that He's the Maker of David; this Messiah is not just another king, He's the King of kings...and that's what Jesus was trying to convey to the people.

Luke 20:41-44 (NKJV) ⁴¹ "And He said to them, 'How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? ⁴² Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, ⁴³ till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"⁴⁴ Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?"

(More than the fruit, the root)

And although there are many prophecies regarding the Messiah as the offspring of David, the Son of David, and the root of David, more than likely here the elder is referring to the prophecies found in the book of Isaiah 11:1, 10

Isaiah 11:1 (NKJV) "There shall come forth a Rod from the **stem** of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

Isaiah 11:10 (NKJV) "And in that day there shall be a **Root** of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious."

700 years before His birth, the root was revealed...and here we see He has prevailed.

Revelation 22:16 (NKJV) "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

The Greek word translated "prevailed" (*nikao*) means to conquer, to overcome, it speaks of victory over the enemy.

C. The Lamb who was slain

John saw him, right there in the middle of everything – in the midst of the throne, in the midst of the 4 living creatures, in the midst of the 24 elders...stood a Lamb as though it had been slain.

The Greek word translated "Lamb" = (arnion) speaks of a little lamb – Jesus is called this 28 times in the book of Revelation.

The Greek word translated "Slain" = (sphazo) means to be slaughtered, and is a word especially used of victims for sacrifice.

And when there were none, John thought, he, we were done, but there arose one, one and only one, the only one, to take the scroll from the right hand of the Father – He didn't approach that throne as a majestic King, or a mighty Lion, He came as a Lamb, the Lamb of God slain on the cross of Calvary, to usher in eternity.

He's the Passover Lamb pointed to in Exodus 12 and 1 Corinthians 5:7.

He's the Lamb slain for you and me, something we see so vividly, in Isaiah 53 – the whole chapter, even in the end of chapter 52. In 53:7, we read that He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

John 1:29 (NKJV) "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'"

1. 7 Horns

"Animals use horns as weapons (see Genesis 22:13; Psalm 69:31), so horns become symbols of power and might. By extension, they signified dominion, representing kingdoms and kings, as in the books of Daniel and Revelation (see Daniel 7:8; Revelation 13:1, 11; 17:3-16)). In the Bible, the number 7 indicated completeness or perfection. Christ's 7 horns therefore symbolize His complete dominion and omnipotence." – Ron Rhodes, 40 Days through Revelation

2. 7 Eyes

Revealing/Confirming the fact that Jesus sees and knows everything.

3. 7 Spirits

Jesus, the Sender of the Holy Spirit in His fullness (John 15:26; 16:7)

This vision reminds us of **Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV)** ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory 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 *the one* which shall not be destroyed."

We see some similarities in these prophecies, but what we have in Revelation is what takes place **before** the Tribulation Period, the bloody Lamb; what we have in Daniel is what takes place **after** the Tribulation Period, the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, the shekinah glory of God.

I. The Scroll (5:1-4)

II. The Slain (5:5-7)

III. The Songs (5:8-14)

⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And

they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

When He had taken the scroll (it's time!!!)

The 4 living creatures, the 24 elders, fall down before Jesus, the Lamb

These 24 have harps – they're worship leaders

And they have these golden bowls full of incense – representative of the prayers of the saints (perhaps all the times God people prayed, "Thy Kingdome Come") this prayer is being answered.

Psalm 141:2 (NKJV) "Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

Or it may just be prayers of praise...for here they sing a new song, which teaches us a few things:

1. Christ is worthy because He was slain (He's the only One who made a way)
2. The church consists of people from every tribe, tongue, and nation
3. We have been made kings and priests to God (Revelation 22:5)

And so...they worshipped (Jam for the Lamb) and all the redeemed in heaven join in! (similar to Revelation 4:11)

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" ¹³ And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" ¹⁴ Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

In that day 10,000 was the biggest, largest, highest number they had – so here it's used by John over and over and over again, multiplied to signify the billions who say (and I believe sing) with that loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb, not just to open the scroll, but to therefore receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory (that's a big one – see Isaiah 42:8; 48:11)

And all creatures in heaven, on earth, and under the earth - all of creation joins in to praise the Father and the Son, equally, "blessing, honor, glory, and power to Him who sits on the throne, and the Lamb.." For how long?

Forever, and ever. Amen!

Psalm 30:5 (NKJV) "For His anger *is but for* a moment, His favor *is for* life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy *comes* in the morning."

Wiersbe, "The scroll (1) represents the title deed to creation, for Jesus Christ alone is the rightful Heir (Psalm 2:8; Hebrews 1:2). Satan offered Him the whole world in return for one act of worship (Matthew 4:8-10), but Jesus won the right to receive the scroll when He gave Himself on the cross."

Robert Murray M'Cheyne, "If the veil of the world's machinery were lifted off, how much we would find is done in answer to the prayers of God's children."

J. Ramsey Michaels:

(Little girl drawing God – no one knows what God looks like – "They will now.")

As the revelation unfolds, "the scene will end in a way that must have been truly disturbing to any Jewish reader – with the worship of..." a Lamb who was slain. (we'll explain)

(The Lion of the Tribe of Judah = the Root of David = the Jewish Messiah)

(The Lamb who was slain = the Christian Messiah)

"The discrepancy between what is announced (the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, v. 5) and what actually appears (a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, v. 6) is not the kind of discrepancy that compels the reader to make a choice. Rather, each designation interprets and clarifies the other: the Jewish Messiah is the Christian Messiah."

The slaughtered Lamb is the triumphant Lion, the mighty King is the crucified Christ.