



13. Revelation 5 – Heaven; The Scroll and the Lamb.

Revelation 5:1-14

This continues the glimpse into Heaven begun in Chapter 4. It pictures Jesus **standing** at the Throne of His Father, **Revelation 5:6**. Right now, Jesus is **seated** at the right hand of God. Following His ascension back to Heaven, Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father where He serves as High Priest making daily intercessions for us, (**Hebrews 7:25**).

¹What we are saying is this: Christ, whose priesthood we have just described, is our High Priest and is in heaven at the place of greatest honour next to God Himself. ² He ministers in the temple

in heaven, the true place of worship built by the Lord and not by human hands." **Hebrews 8:1-2. (TLB)**

What a thought when we feel people have stopped praying for us, or the problem is too personal, we can remember Jesus Himself is bringing us before the throne of our Father God, daily.

"Who then will condemn us? Will Christ? *No!* For He is the one who died for us and came back to life again for us and is sitting at the place of highest honour next to God, pleading for us there in heaven. Who then can ever keep Christ's love from us? When we have trouble or calamity, when we are hunted down or destroyed, is it because He doesn't love us anymore? And if we are hungry or penniless or in danger or threatened with death, has God deserted us?" **Romans 8:34-35. (TLB)**

This gives us the most complete representation possible before the throne of God. In exchange, Jesus simply asks us to represent Him on earth. The Holy Spirit empowers Believers daily to do this. We should do our utmost for Him, representing Him in the best possible way.

Revelation 5 opens with what appears to be a problem in Heaven. In the right hand of the person sitting on the throne is a sealed scroll. In John's day, books were written on scrolls - pieces of papyrus or vellum rolled up and sealed with clay or wax. The scroll that John sees contains the full account of what God has in store for the world, others feel it is the title deeds of the Earth. The seven seals indicate the importance of its contents and God's keenness to keep the plans secret until He is ready to disclose His plans. The seals are located throughout the scroll so that as each one is broken, more of the scroll can be read to reveal another phase of God's plan for the end of the world. This scroll has writing on both sides of it, but it appears that no one has the authority to open the seals on the scroll, (**Revelation 5:1-3**). The seal was in the right hand of Him who sat on the Throne; this hand was the hand of authority and power, so this person had the authority to hold the scroll. The right to rule the Earth is now to be decided at the Throne of God, once and for all. Further, a mighty angel was asking a question: "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll? (Rev 5:2) And who is entitled and deserves and is morally fit to break its seals?" (**AMP**) He was not asking who was willing to break the seals as there would be many of them but who was **worthy** to do this work?

There are no unanswerable questions in Heaven, so this problem and this question were both articulated for the benefit of John, and of course, Believers through the ages like us. The writers of the Bible pose questions and problems under the direction of the Holy Spirit that have both solutions and answers, so that we can understand by faith and learn by reading them, how God deals in the affairs of man in both a heavenly and an earthly realm. It is important that we understand that God has solutions to our problems and predicaments and that He is not phased by our simplistic and interminable questions. On the contrary, He wants us to ask. We refer to the following passage as God's telephone number! "This is what the Lord says, He who made the earth, the Lord who formed it and established it—the Lord is His name: ³ 'Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.' **Jeremiah 33:2-3**

There is not much point in Him telling us things we already know when we call to Him. It is His greatest desire to have deep and meaningful fellowship with us, so He promises us that when we call to Him, **1**. He will answer us and **2**. He will tell us great and unsearchable thing we don't know. Our reaction is often 'but He has never told me those sort of things, if only He would!' Perhaps the question that should be asked is this: 'Have you ever called on Him?' and if you have, then have you ever really listened for His answer? It often comes as a still, small voice deep in the centre of our heart. We spend too much time allowing our

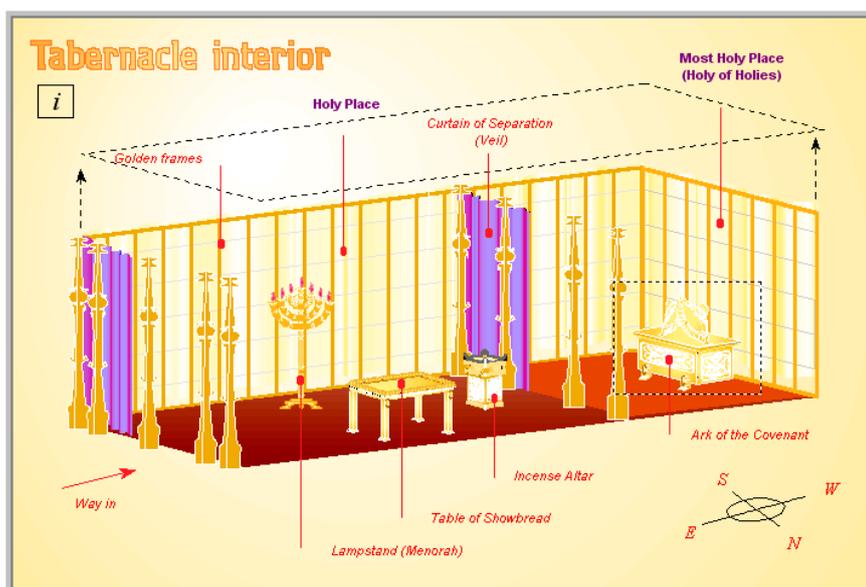
emotions to respond to our mind, when instead our emotions should listen to our heart. Our heart is our saved spirit, which is trying to be led by His Spirit.

The apparent lack of anyone to be able to open the scroll or the seals or even to look inside the scroll had a devastating effect on John. He wept in Heaven because there appeared to be no one worthy for the job! Out of all the billions of people who have lived not one was fit to do this job for the Father. Have we ever been so close to the things of God that the apparent lack of a solution to a problem brought such sadness to our lives that we wept and wept? If not, then perhaps we should try calling to God to give us His heart for a lost nation such as ours, or a lost friend, workforce, village, city etc. and to enable us to 'see' the potential loss from His point of view?

There are no problems without solutions in the Kingdom of God! In fact there are no problems, because the solutions have already been provided! God never leaves Himself without a man, and in this hour of solemn crisis, He has One ready. One of the twenty four Elders spoke to John telling him not to weep as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals. **(Revelation 5:5)**. The Lion is Jesus, **Genesis 49:8-12**. He has proved Himself worthy to break the seals and open the scroll by living the only perfect life of obedience to God, dying on the Cross for the sin of the world, and rising from the dead to show His power and authority over evil and death. Only Christ conquered sin, death, hell and Satan himself; so only He can be trusted with the world's future. The Root of David refers to Jesus being from David's family line, thus fulfilling the promise of the Messiah in the Old Testament, **Isaiah 11:1-3** Jesus Christ is pictured as both a Lion (symbolizing His authority and power) and a Lamb (symbolizing His submission to God's will). One of the elders calls John to look at the Lion, but when John looks he sees a Lamb. Christ the Lamb was the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind; "John (the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" **John 1:29-30**

"The Lamb was in the centre of the Throne and encircled by the four beasts and in the middle of the elders." **Revelation 5:6**. How did John miss Him? Was he so taken up with all the sights of the Glory and the loud sounds that he completely missed the Lamb. How does that happen? We can do that as well going to fantastic conferences, hearing exciting speakers and profound messages, but still miss the Lord Jesus Christ in the middle of it all! Only He can save us from the terrible events revealed by the scroll. Christ the Lamb won the greatest battle of all; He defeated all the forces of evil by dying on the Cross. The role of Christ the Lion will be to lead the battle where Satan is finally defeated, **Revelation 19:19-21**.

Jesus the Lion is victorious because of what Jesus the Lamb has already done. We will participate in His victory, not because of our effort or goodness, but because He has promised eternal life to all who believe in Him.



The Lamb had the appearance of having been killed. A lamb (under the Old Covenant) was killed once a year as a sacrifice for sin. The blood of the slain Lamb was sprinkled over the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant by the High Priest as God (through Moses) had instructed the Israelites. However this Lamb was very much alive, risen from the dead. This Lamb was none other than Jesus Whose blood had been shed as a full, perfect and sufficient once-only sacrifice. Now every person who wishes can receive forgiveness for their sins, and direct access to God, **Isaiah 53:7**.

This Lamb was now centre-stage before His Father's throne, encircled by the Elders and the Living Creatures. This Lamb had seven horns. A horn symbolises strength and so seven horns symbolised perfect strength. He also had seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. **(Rev 5:6)** This signifies the Holy Spirit given to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. **2 Chronicles 16:9**

Jesus was the only One Who was worthy to take the scroll, and He did. He took it from His Father's hand as He was the only One who had the right to have the title deeds to the Earth and to His People. He was the Creator of the whole Earth, He bought it back with His Blood and He is about to move to redeem it forever with His power. The world is His and we cannot question His right to it.

The moment the Lamb is revealed to John, the Elders and the four living creatures fell down in praise before Him. Each had a bowl full of the prayers of God's people. These were presented to Him as they sang this new song:

"..... You purchased people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."
Revelation 5:9-10 AMP

The worship in chapter 4 was all around Jesus the Creator. Here it is around the fact that Jesus is worthy of praise as He was slain, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain' is the leading worship song of the whole heavenly host. Imagine that! Jesus, Who had spoken the Earth into being, chose to be born in a cave, to subject Himself to parental restrictions; to work as a carpenter, to become a Rabbi with no base, and was hounded by the people He had created. He was cursed by so many and finally killed off by those who despised Him. He, rather, chose in His perfection to take on our mess, to wash us in His own Blood and so give us the only chance we will ever receive to spend eternity with Him, giving us the opportunity to enter into this Heavenly worship with clean hands and a pure heart.

It is the Cross that draws out our awe and worship, as we focus on Him alone. In Heaven they are seeing nothing but the Lamb. He is the centre of all their attention, they are certainly not thinking about themselves or the people around them. We need to remember this 'picture' to help us focus on the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. With this in mind we should remind ourselves that this is choir practice for heaven and so worship the Lamb of God with our whole hearts.

Everything written about the Elders also applies to all true Believers. **1.** The Elders are described as having 'thrones' in **Revelation 4:4 Amp**. The Word of God teaches that 'we shall reign on the earth', **Revelation 5:10**. **2.** The Elders wore white robes and crowns of gold, **Revelation 4:4**. **3.** The Elders are associated with the prayers of the saints, **Revelation 5:8** and **4.** They sing a new song that they have been redeemed from all nations by the Blood of the Lamb, **Revelation 5:9-10**. This clearly identifies them to be from earth (as opposed to being angelic beings).

Christianity is not a Western religion; it is the Truth for all people. Jesus when He was on earth said that He is, and was, the **Way** and the **Truth** and the **Life**.

"No one comes to the Father except through Me." **John 14:6**

We see in this passage in **Revelation 5:9** that there are going to be people from **EVERY** tribe, language, people and nation in Heaven:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." **John 3:16**

Jesus has never been exclusive but people choose to exclude themselves. As Christians we need to share how we see heaven to encourage people to choose Jesus. After all if we go to a great place for a holiday we certainly tell everyone especially if the cost has been paid in full by someone else!

"¹¹ And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," **Revelation 5:11 KJV**.

Some people use this passage to say that the angels number over 100 trillion:

• $(10,000 \times 10,000) = 100,000,000$ (100 million) $\times 1000 = 100$ billion $\times 1000 = 100$ trillion.

Whether that is right or wrong we can't say, but what we can say, is that however many of them there actually are, it is an awful lot! Some of these angels have been assigned to minister to and for us, if we are Christians, **Hebrews 1:14 Amp**. God's angels watch over us constantly to protect us, **Psalms 91:11-12**. It is possible to entertain angels while not being aware of it.

"Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. ² Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing, some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it," **Hebrews 13:1-2 NIV**

The presence of the angelic host before the throne of God is a further indication that the Church has been taken up to Heaven before this point, as otherwise the angels would still be still on assignment for, and on behalf of the Believers.

"Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!" **Revelation 5:13.**

How often do we remember that a day is coming when every living being will bow before the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ; that will include fallen angels, Satan himself, all people who have rejected Him and all who know Him as Lord. Those sentenced to an eternity outside Heaven will still have to bow the knee to Him and acknowledge that He is who He says He is, even though they turned against Him when on the earth. They will all say "blessing and honour, glory and power be unto Him" **Philippians 2:9-11** even though they are damned outcasts,

Praise and worship in Heaven is and will always be constant. It will consist of new songs and old, so we need to become used to the transition now. It will be no good to say that we don't like the praise and worship in Heaven! The difference there will be that it will come from our hearts, always and consistently!

13. Revelation 5 – Heaven; The Scroll and the Lamb – Challenge Questions

1. **Read the Notes and the Bible Verses** referred to in them. Highlight the points that 'speak' to you and share with the group.
2. What encouraged you and challenged you about worship in Heaven? Have you ever experienced this quality of worship? Would you like to share?

Read Revelation Chapter 6:1-17

3. Who is the only One worthy of opening the seals to the scroll? What did He do to become worthy?
4. The seals are the first of three sets of Judgements to be released on the earth. Are the seals opened sequentially? Do they operate on the earth sequentially?
5. Explain why you think it necessary for the earth to receive such Judgements.
6. How many seals are opened in this Chapter?
7. What effect does the opening of the first seal have? Who is the rider of this horse? What is his aim in life? What is his name?
8. What effect does the opening of the second seal have? Does this effect last throughout the Tribulation period?
9. What effect does the opening of the third seal have on the earth? How serious is this effect? What do you think being a Christian would be like at this time?

- 10.** Is it possible to become a Christian during the Tribulation? Who would be likely to become Christians at this time?
- 11.** Why is it important that people become Christians before the Tribulation period? Why is it important to advise people to become Christians **NOW**?
- 12.** What effect does the opening of the fourth seal have on the people living on the earth in those days?
- 13.** The opening of the fifth seal brings home to us that there will be martyrs in those days. Is the standard for becoming a Christian going to be different in the days of the Tribulation?
- 14.** The opening of the sixth seal has a different effect on the earth than any of the other five. What effect does it have?
- 15.** The sixth seal has caused the 'rolling back' of the natural world. What did this 'rolling back' reveal? Why were the people terrified?
- 16.** Read **Romans 8:18-27**. Why is the creation waiting in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed? (**Romans 8:19**) Who are the sons of God? What encouraging verse do you get from this Romans passage, write it here and learn it.
- 17.** Sum up in one short sentence the dramatic events of this chapter