

Jesus, the Lamb, Is Worthy to Open the Scroll

Sunday, June 5 at 8:00 & 10:45 † Wednesday, June 8 at 7 PM
Seventh Sunday of Easter – 2011

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, last week in Revelation chapter 4 we saw an **awesome heavenly scene**: † God the Father on the throne, † God the Holy Spirit before the throne, † four living creatures surrounding the throne, and † 24 elders surrounding the four living creatures and the throne. Now, *in chapter 5*, the same vision continues:

1. **Great Sadness – No One is Worthy:** ¹ I saw in the right hand of Him [*God the Father*] who sat on the throne a book [*scroll*] written inside and on the back [*within and on the reverse side*], sealed up with seven seals. ² And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud [*great*] voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?” ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. ⁴ Then I *began to weep greatly* because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it;
 - a. What is in the scroll? *Events that will happen in the future!* **Revelation 1:1** “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place...”
 - b. Why great sadness? The time when Revelation was written was a time of intense persecution; therefore, John longed to know that *in Christ we win!*

2. **Jesus, the Lamb, is Worthy:** ⁵ and one of the elders [one of the 24 mentioned in chapter 4] said to me, “Stop weeping [there is no need for tears; here is the reason]; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.” Of the 12 sons of Jacob, Judah is the one through whom Jesus eventually came; *He is the Lion of Judah as prophesied in Genesis 49!* Jesus is also the root of David, *since He is a descendant of David*; He is able to open the seals *because He has conquered sin, death, and the devil!*
- a. A description of Jesus – ⁶ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain [as having been slain – possibly with visible fatal wounds, YET ALIVE], having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God [thus the Holy Spirit], sent out into all the earth [on the Day of Pentecost (John 14:26; 15:26; Acts 2:4, 33, 38), which is celebrated next Sunday].
- b. The action of Jesus – ⁷ And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him [God the Father] who sat on the throne. Remember, what Jesus declared before His ascension: “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” (Matthew 28:18 NAU) Therefore, He took the scroll for the purpose of opening it because He, *as the Victorious Lamb, is worthy!* Now, *having made mention in this chapter about Jesus as both Lion and Lamb, think about our stained glass window above our Altar. Then, seeing the powerful Lion and victorious Lamb in the window, let us be filled with peace in Jesus!*

- c. The awesome response of the living creatures and elders – ⁸ When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints *[With those actions, they acknowledge the power and authority of Jesus, the Lamb! "...it does not mean the elders or creatures are mediating the prayers to God or acting as intercessors for earthly believers. Instead, the vision illustrates that believers' prayers ascend to and are received by God through Christ, who is the sole mediator" (AI)].* ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation *[To pay for our sin, to make us righteous, to open heaven – only the willing sacrifice of the God-Man would be sufficient; therefore, He took action and His finished work purchased people for God from the four corners of the earth – even you and me!].* ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." Even now, *Jesus is reigning over all things (Ephesians 1:19-23)!* By grace through faith in Him as our Savior, we are ♦members of God's kingdom, ♦priests, *who pray for those currently outside of the kingdom*, and ♦people who are already reigning with the Lamb (*Ephesians 2:4-6*)!
- d. The awesome response of many angels – ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power

- and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” When the Son of God stepped into His *state of humiliation*, ♦He set aside His heavenly riches; ♦He did not fully use His Divine power, wisdom, and might; and ♦He did not receive honor, glory, and blessing. But now, *victorious and back in heaven*, that praise is rightly heaped upon Him! Here we can think of the number 7 in two ways:
- i. The work of the Triune God (3) to redeem the sinful world (4); $3 + 4 = 7$.
 - ii. *Seven words of praise* (7 = perfection) being heaped upon *the perfect Lamb of God!*
- e. The awesome response of every created thing – ¹³ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.” Not only angels and people, but *EVERY CREATED THING* gave great praise to both the Father and the Son!
- f. The ongoing awesome response – ¹⁴ And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped. As the redeemed children of God in Christ, *we are to live lives of worship to the Triune God* – not just on Sunday, but **each day** in **every way** we are called “to present [our] bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* [our] spiritual service of worship” (Romans 12:1 NAS).

Conclusion: And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

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