

The Lord: The Lion, The Lamb Revelation 5:1-10

Perhaps you have heard the expression: "It's not what you know but who you know." Those who say this are usually referring to the process of getting a new job, new contract or some sort of favor. If you have friends in high places (they say) then you have a better chance of getting what you are asking for.

But it's interesting to note that people generally take the opposite approach when it comes to Biblical prophecy. Most of their emphasis is on what you know, not whom you know. But this approach is exactly the opposite of the way the Book of the Revelation is written. In Revelation 4 and 5, the gateway chapters which describe future events, knowing God through Christ is far more important than knowing the events on the prophetic calendar. [In Revelation 4](#), we were brought right into God's throne room in heaven. We learned of the astounding wonders around God's throne. But through these wonders we learned to worship the One who sits upon the throne.

In Revelation 4 we learned that the throne is surrounded by a rainbow, encircled by 24 thrones with 24 elders; these men are robed in white garments and wearing crowns. Proceeding from the throne are lightning, thunder and voices. Before the throne are 7 lamps of fire, representing the perfect "sevenfold" Spirit of God. And extending out from the throne is a sea of glass. But then the vision returns to the inner circle around the throne to reveal 4 "living ones;" according to Ezekiel chapter 10, these are cherubim, a type of angel. These proclaim the holiness of God, and their proclamation leads the 24 elders to fall down to worship the worthy Lord upon His throne. As we studied last week, these wonders should lead us to worship the Lord as well. When you think through the future, think first of falling before His throne. Revelation 4 reveals consummate praise to God, but Revelation 5 is designed to surprise us with equal worship for another. What? That sounds almost blasphemous! Worship for another? Along with the One who reigns upon the throne?!

In Revelation chapter 4, the most frequently occurring important word is "throne." In Revelation 5, the most important word is "scroll." "Worthy," "living ones," and "lamb" are tied for second. In Revelation 5, when you look through the window of the Word into the future, you learn to fall before the worthy Lamb.

The Scroll, v. 1

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book [scroll] written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

As we shall see in Revelation 6, when these seals are broken, some very significant events will occur on earth. It is not too much to say that these will be "earth shaking events" although that term is commonly misused. There is a friendly difference of opinion about how this scroll should be described. Is it a scroll of judgments? Yes, in the main, but the 5th seal (Revelation 6:9-11) also describes the prayer of martyred saints (who are appealing for judgments to come). This is probably the scroll described by the prophet in Ezekiel 2:8-10, as declaring, "... **lamentations, and mourning, and woe.**" Some say that this scroll is the title deed to the earth and heavens. They would point to

the idea of the “kinsman-redeemer,” the role that Boaz played in the Book of Ruth when he purchased Naomi’s property. W.A. Criswell, for instance, maintains that the scroll is a document of the inheritance forfeited by Adam and cursed, but redeemed by the Second Adam at the culmination of all things. In roughly the same terms, John MacArthur and Robert L. Thomas maintain that this scroll is not a will, nor a contract; it is a title deed to the earth. In any case, this scroll is the scroll of tragic judgments that will come on the earth.

The Most Significant Question: Who is worthy to open the scroll? vs. 2-4

² And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book [scroll], and to loose the seals thereof? ³ And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. ⁴ And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

The word “scroll” is the most important word in Revelation 5. “Worthy” is also an important word. The mighty angel proclaims the question long and loud: “WHO IS WORTHY TO OPEN THE SCROLL AND TO BREAK THE SEALS?” And the depressing answer is that no man in heaven, earth or under the earth – no human being, past or present – was worthy to unleash these judgments. What?! Can’t anyone make the terrible wrongs right? If no one can correct these, then it’s every man for himself. Why wouldn’t I take revenge on those who hurt me? For instance, the social justice movement demands restrictions and reparations to right the wrongs of the past. If no one can correct the wrongs, then we would have every right to act in a barbaric manner toward each other. This is why the apostle John wept with a loud wailing cry of despair. Couldn’t someone be found who would deal with devil and this corrupt world system? The Bible has a wonderful way of portraying what I like to call, “the need to know.” Verses 2-4 created “the need to know.” If no answer can be found, we will all descend into deepest agony.

The Lord: The Lion of Judah, v.5

⁵ And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Glory to God! Someone is found worthy to break the seals and unleash just judgment on the earth! It is the Lion of Judah. In Genesis 49:9-10, Jacob predicted that the king would come from the lion-like tribe of Judah. In Revelation 22:16, Jesus identified Himself as “the root and offspring of David,” referring to his descendant. When you read Isaiah chapter 11, you can see the stem of Jesse (David’s father) is the Messiah who will bring judgment upon the earth. No one else was found worthy. Only Jesus Christ – God who became a human being – had a perfect, spotless record of righteousness as He endured the wickedness of this world. He alone is worthy, He prevailed, and He will break the seals of judgment as perfect God and perfect man. Remember, He was in all points tempted, just as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15).

The Lord: The Lamb who was slain, vs. 6-10

The Appearance of the Lamb, v.6

Between the throne and the four living ones, but also among the elders, v.6a

⁶ And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders ...

As directed, John looked for the Lion of the tribe of Judah. But that's not what he saw. Near to but separate from the One who sat on the throne, and yet among the living ones, and yet again, among the elders, whom did John see? (Just a side note here, this is a beautiful picture of the Second Person of the Godhead, who is also a human being. He along is the bridge, the Mediator between God and man, 1 Timothy 2:5.) Some religions insist that their leader is a "pontiff" (derived from the Latin [*pons, pont*] meaning "bridge.") But there is only one bridge between God and man – Jesus Christ! When you look through the window of the Word of God into the future, you learn to fall before the worthy Lamb.

The little Lamb bearing the marks of death, v.6b

"... stood a Lamb as it had been slain..."

When John looked for the Lion, he saw the living Lamb with mortal wounds. This word "lamb" occurs 4 times in Revelation 5, and every time it translates the Greek [*arnion*] meaning "little lamb" (or "pet lamb"). This is the word that Jesus used when He described His followers to Peter saying, "**Feed my lambs**" (John 21:15). Yet this Lamb bears the mortal wounds of having died. This is the One of whom John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). As a redeemed child of God, John saw Jesus as the Lamb whose life and death had paid for His sins. The worthy Lamb who died for the sins of the world is worthy to unleash terrible judgments upon the earth.

He has 7 horns (perfect in powerful authority)

He has 7 eyes (the sevenfold Spirit of God upon Him)

... having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

The Action of the Lamb: He takes the scroll, v.7

⁷ And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

Rest assured that the day will come when Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, comes to break the seals and unleash judgment upon this wicked world. So, when it comes to Biblical information about the future, is it more important to dwell on what you know or Whom you know?

The Adoration of the Lamb

⁸ And when he had taken the book, the four beasts [living ones] and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. ⁹ And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; ¹⁰ And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

As we noted earlier, Revelation 4 reveals consummate praise to God, but Revelation 5 is designed to surprise us with equal worship for another. What? That sounds almost blasphemous! Worship for

another? Along with the One who reigns upon the throne?! Yet the worship of the Lamb in Revelation 5 parallels the worship of the Father in Revelation 4. Taken together, these chapters are powerful Biblical proof for the deity – the Godhood – of Jesus Christ. In Revelation 5, when you look through the window of the Word into the future, you learn to worship the worthy Lamb. Let's take our cue from the angels and elders. When the Lamb takes the scroll (v. 7), the angels and elders fall down to worship Him. These verses plainly portray the deity of Jesus Christ.

When Mormon Joseph Smith took the Bible in hand to rewrite it, he changed John 1:1 to read as follows: "In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God."ⁱ Notice his heretical additions. Among other changes, he changed the Scriptural reading of "the Word" to "the gospel" and the phrase, "and the Word was God" to "the Word was of God." But as we shall see in the next message, those in Heaven worship both the Lord and the Lamb.

The Jehovah's Witness writings also twisted and changed the Holy Scriptures substantially. But they missed the implications of Revelation 5:8 where the angels and elders fall down to worship the Lamb. In John 1:1, the JW writing reads that "The Word was in the beginning with God and was a god." They insist that Jesus Christ was a created god (contradicting Isaiah 43:10, "**before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.**") But they missed the worship of the Lamb by Himself as God and then the worship of the Lamb and the One upon the throne together. Revelation chapter 5 clearly depicts the deity of Christ.

Revelation 5 clearly portrays the deity of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. Later, in Revelation 19:9-10, John was so awed by the prophecy that he fell at the feet of God's messenger. For that, John was immediately rebuked for this and instructed, "Worship God." (This same lesson is reiterated in Revelation 22:8-9.) When you compare these passages, you realize that if Jesus Christ were merely God's creation, it would have been blasphemy for Him to receive worship in Revelation 5. But He is God and He did receive the worship of the angels and elders. (Even God the Father praises Him as God, according to Hebrews 1:8.)

Applications of this message

When it comes to Biblical prophecy, the main emphasis is not on what you know but the One you know – Jesus Christ, God Himself.

Use the Word of God to behold your God. These wonders should lead every one of us to worship the Lord and the Lamb.

When you look through the Word of God into the future, you learn to fall before the worthy Lamb, Jesus Christ.

You must stand before Jesus Christ, the ruler of this world. Will you stand before Him as a fierce Lion or as your faithful Lamb? If you embrace Him now as your Lamb – the only sacrifice for your sins – then you will not face Him as the Lion who judges the world. *Even now, you are making the choice: Lion or Lamb?*

Doxology from Revelation 5

Here is the Lion of Judah who rises; this Root of David has conquered them all
He takes the scroll from the Heavenly Father: scroll of the judgments of what must befall
This is the Lamb who was slain and has risen; perfect in power, He rises to reign
He has the sevenfold Spirit upon Him; He takes the scroll as His right and domain
All of the angels are bowing before Him; elders adore Him with music and prayers
Sing a new song of the Lamb who is worthy, honoring Him with their song that declares:
Worthy are You! Take the scroll of the judgments; You are the One! For our sins You were slain
Your blood has ransomed us from ev'ry nation: made us a kingdom of priests who shall reign
Thousands and thousands of angels rejoicing, join with the elders to worship Your name
Worthy, so worthy the Lamb who was slaughtered, worthy of blessing and power and fame
Worthy of honor and power and glory, worthy of wisdom and riches and might
Worthy of all of the praise from Your creatures, bowing before You in fear and delight
Worthy, so worthy, the Lord who is reigning: ruling o'er all from His heavenly throne
Worthy, so worthy, the Lamb who has risen, by His great power, He made us His own
Blessing and honor and glory and power unto the Lord and the Lamb for all men
We worship them with our praises forever, God lives forever and ever, Amen!

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ⁱ "Did Joseph Smith change the Bible to fit his own doctrine?" accessed at <https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/cults/exposem/xm02.cfm>