

Christ our Lord. The Holy Spirit is out to make plain and personal that Jesus is the Saviour of sinners and in and through Him, by grace through faith, confessing our sins and trusting alone in Him, we find abundant and complete salvation. The Spirit being the seven eyes of the Lamb and seven horns of the Lamb tells us there is no sinner's case surprising to Him, and there is no lost case or wayward case or backsliding case or hardened case which is impossible for Him to change and transform. How much do you and I wait in prayer with perseverance and expectation looking to the Saviour, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, still appearing as a Lamb that has been slain, and still offering Himself as the one and only almighty Saviour of sinners? John wrote the book of Revelation for encouragement to the Christian church ever to look to Jesus and to stay with His holy Word, looking for the Spirit's blessing time and again. Is this what you too are about, dear friend?

Indeed, not only should this verse motivate and guide us in a response of prayer to God, but also in a response of praise to God. The remainder of Revelation 5 brings this out as it breaks forth in praises to God as the great and glorious God not only of creation but of salvation, for sinners like you and me, as many as will trust and obey Him. The chapter tells too what the special focus of our praises should be and will be when filled with the Holy Spirit. Then this will be your testimony and song, your praise and exaltation with so much humble hearty adoration, saying, "*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!*" Indeed, as the last part of verse 13 states, "*Blessing and honour and glory and power, be unto Him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever!*"

May God so bless by His Holy Spirit this message, that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, the crucified and risen Saviour of sinners, be all your hope and trust and love and joy too and that you live that others may so come to know Him as well, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, if saved anyone will be. Even so, Holy Spirit, prosper Your holy Word wherever it goes forth in truth across this globe! In Jesus' and the Father's Name, from the Throne room above! Amen.

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Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS MINISTRY

In Acts 2 we learn about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and His gospel ministry through the apostles and followers of Jesus Christ. In this message, we consider more the person and work of the blessed Holy Spirit, the Divine Agent of salvation. Our text is from Revelation 5 which gives us a very beautiful, powerful picture of the Holy Spirit and His ministry, a picture that is still true today, and has been ever since Pentecost Sunday in Acts 2. Listen here to Revelation 5:6, giving us a divinely inspired vision of the throne room in heaven above where God dwells. We read there, "*...in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*" From this verse and its context, notice with me first the picture and proclamation of this gospel verse and then, two points of application from it.

John the Apostle is on the island of Patmos because of persecution, and God, by the Holy Spirit, gives him visions of the future and visions of gospel truth for the Church then and now. John is given to see the heavenly throne. He sees this throne room in heaven in all its glory and then chapter 5 tells how he sees a book in the hand of God, sealed with seven seals. This book, as one commentator writes, "symbolizes God's purpose with respect to the entire universe throughout history, and concerning all creatures in all ages and to all eternity. If that book remains sealed, God's purposes are not realized; His plan, [and especially then all His gospel plans and the plans for the coming of His kingdom and it's final glorious establishment] will not be carried out. As John looks on, it seems at first there was no one able to take that book and open it's seals, meaning no one to bring about the complete fulfillment of all God's gospel plans and the establishment of His eternal kingdom. The result is John the Apostle begins to weep and he wails in grief, for that would mean no triumph for believers and no ultimate victory for the Christian Church, all God's people throughout the ages."

So John is very sad that no one can be found to open the book. But then comes one of the elders, one who himself has experienced God's saving triumphant work in and through Christ Jesus. This elder tells John, "*Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book....*" This Lion of the tribe of Judah refers of course to Jesus Christ the Saviour and Lord. So John looks again, and instead of seeing a majestic mighty Lion, he sees what? "*And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne [and of the four living creatures], and in the*

midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." [vs. 6] The Lion appears as a Lamb, and verse 7 tells us He, that Lamb, came and took the scroll, and then the rest of the chapter is a crescendo of praise and celebration beginning around the throne and extending to all creatures in all the universe in endless expressions of thanksgiving and adoration for Christ the Lord.

This is the setting in which we find a most beautiful and powerful and comforting description of the Holy Spirit. How is the Holy Spirit described? As the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth! Consider the gospel teaching and encouragement with this description of the third Person of the Trinity.

For one we find the Holy Spirit together with the Father and the Son on the heavenly throne. Our text passage tells of the Triune God in the throne room, which represents the universal and united sovereignty and ruler-ship of God over all. In this regard, by the way, it is very interesting to note that the book of Revelation is known as the "throne book" with the word "throne" used 45 times in this last book of the Bible whereas it is found only 15 other times in all the rest of the New Testament. You see, the last book of the Bible is telling us, God, yes, God Triune, is on the throne above all, and that it is King Jesus to Whom is given all power and authority in all of history. This is the gospel truth - His is the kingdom, the power, and the glory.

Notice this next truth - the Holy Spirit is sent forth from the Father and from the Lord Jesus especially as the crucified and risen Saviour. How is Jesus described here? He is described as "*a Lamb as though it had been slain*" and John saw this Lamb standing, and both Jesus standing and appearing as One Who had been slain are given in verb tenses telling of the lasting benefits and power of Jesus' once for all sacrifice and proclaiming His interests in seeing His saving work come to complete fulfillment. And how now will Jesus fulfill all His gospel ministry and cause His Church and kingdom to be built up and established even forevermore? It is by the Holy Spirit driving home through the Word the gospel message of Jesus Christ the Saviour. For our encouragement, look how the Holy Spirit is described in symbolic language as the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb which, we are told, are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.

Do you understand what this symbolic language tells us about the Holy Spirit? He is sent out from the crucified and resurrected, triumphant Saviour from the throne room in glory, and He is sent out as one Who Himself is like the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. Horns in the Bible represent strength and power. Other verses in Scripture with that word, "horn", clearly bring this out. And the number seven is often in the Bible a symbol of completeness or perfection. The seven horns represent the perfect might of the Holy Spirit as the Agent of the Lamb of

God. The Lamb of God, appearing as though it had been slain, is represented as all powerful in His ministry also through the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is described too as the seven eyes of the Lamb, meaning He is all seeing and all-knowing, and again, the seven eyes represents the perfection of and fullness of His insight, knowledge, and wisdom. The Holy Spirit works in applying the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ with infinite power and infinite knowledge and wisdom. Never is any case unknown or too difficult for the Holy Spirit to penetrate into, and never is any case simply too hard for Him to handle; there is no such thing as impossible cases with the Holy Spirit described as the seven horns and seven eyes and seven Spirits of God.

The picture given in summary is that the Holy Spirit is, like God the Father and the Son, full of amazing, awesome, saving power. And, notice this other detail yet, we are told He is sent out, or sent forth, "*into all the earth*", in other words to all peoples in the whole wide world. The verb "sent forth" is in a verb tense meaning He has been sent out and is continually being sent out by the Saviour and His Father in heaven for the gathering in of sinners unto salvation through Jesus Christ till all history is fulfilled and the last seal opened, the final day comes, and the eternal realm begins.

So far then, we have seen something of the picture our text gives especially also of the Holy Spirit and His ministry now, still today. In the few moments I have left, I will make two points of application which also are based on the book of Revelation, and the text passage itself, namely, how the picture of our text should lead to prayer to God, and praise to Him.

First, if we understand anything of the awesome picture of the Triune God on the throne and of Christ standing in glory as a Lamb as though it had been slain, and of the seven Spirits sent forth into all the earth in His Name, it should lead to much prayer to God for the visitation and ministry of the Holy Spirit in our own lives and that of many others as well. The Holy Spirit makes the Word of God come alive with saving, convicting, converting, and sanctifying power. Without the Spirit's saving and heart renewing power accompanying the Word, people remain unchanged and unsaved. But when the Holy Spirit works, then sinners are saved and God's people become convicted and enthused with the gospel, and earnestly seek to live for God and for good, to His praise in all things.

Do you pray much and often for the Holy Spirit and His ministry sent from heaven above? Jesus says in Luke 11:13, "*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?*" The Holy Spirit comes from the Saviour in heaven, appearing as a Lamb that keeps the marks of having been slain, meaning then also the Holy Spirit is not only out always to minister the gospel of salvation for undeserving sinners, convicting of sin, yes, but showing and drawing us to the only Saviour from sin, Jesus