**Revelation**

*Lesson 15 – Revelation 5*

* Chapter 5 continues the vision of the heavenly throne room, but it’s the second act within the same vision. There is a shift in the main idea from all of creation worshipping God to redemption and new creation.

*Verses 1-4: The Scroll*

1. The scroll that John now sees is in the Father’s right hand. What’s significant about this?
2. This seal is written on the front and back and is sealed with 7 seals. This indicates that the contents of the scroll are complete and not missing anything. Nothing needs to be added or taken away from the scroll. And the 7 seals again indicate that it is perfectly complete and secure, but also that the contents are hidden. Daniel 12:4 talks about a sealed book that is sealed up until the end of time.
3. What are the contents of the scroll? Most likely is the destiny of the world all under God’s plan. Chapter 6 is going to show the opening of the seals so it seems that this scroll contains from Revelation 6-22. This scroll is the writing of God’s eternal decree.
4. And nobody is found worthy to break the seals and open the scroll which leads to John weeping. None of God’s creation is worthy to reveal God’s eternal decree or even look at it (verse 4)
5. It’s possible John weeps because he was promised that he would be shown the future in Rev 4:1 but now that promise appears about to be frustrated. It’s also possible he weeps because he thinks God’s purposes would not be fulfilled or revealed.

*Verses 5-*8*: The Savior*

1. But Jesus, because He has conquered, is worthy to open the seals and reveal the scroll. (verse 5)
2. Lion of Judah – Genesis 49:9 – “Judah is a lion’s cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?”
3. Root of David – Isaiah 11:1-2 – “There shall come forth **a shoot** from **the stump of Jesse**, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
4. Zechariah 3:8 – “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch.”
5. Zechariah 6:12-13 – “Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. **13**It is he who shall build the temple of the Lord and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne”
6. Jesus is the Davidic descendent and though it looks like David’s kingdom (tree) has fallen so that now it’s only a stump in the ground, a new shoot/branch will come out of it (the Messiah) for the purpose of restoring David’s kingdom and the fulfillment of God’s covenant with David.
7. And John turns and sees a slain Lamb standing among the 24 elders and this lamb has 7 horns and 7 eyes which John says are the 7 spirits of God (verse 6). The lamb imagery as well as the description of being slain indicates the sufferings of Jesus Christ but though it was killed the lamb is now standing showing that the lamb lives again and indicates the resurrected and ascended Jesus Christ.
8. We saw 2 weeks ago that the 7 spirits of God represent the Holy Spirit. Horns represent power and 7 represents perfection so the lamb is God’s perfect power or omnipotence. Eyes represent knowledge and wisdom so that lamb is also God’s perfect knowledge or omniscience. The lamb is the wisdom of God. So here is a Trinitarian scene as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all present and only God as Trinity can achieve His purposes.
9. 1 Corinthians 1:24 – “but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”
10. John 1:29 – “The next day he [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
11. Isaiah 53:7 – “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.”
12. So Jesus moves to the throne and takes the scroll out of the Father’s right hand (verse 7). Jesus is God’s authority over His plan for saving His elect and judging the world. Remember Jesus’ words that all authority is given to Him by the Father. So this vision is like a continuation of Acts 1 after Jesus ascends.
13. This Jesus, descended from David and the tribe of Judah, has conquered all the enemies of God by defeating them on the cross as the sacrificial Lamb of God. Thus, it takes God Himself, the 2nd person of the Trinity, securing salvation for His people and defeating His enemies, to be worthy of breaking these seals and opening the scroll.
14. When Jesus does this, the 4 living creatures and 24 elders fall down before the Lamb (verse 8). They start worshipping Jesus. Another proof that Jesus is God is the fact that He is receiving worship which is due to God alone. These harps that the elders are holding represent praise to God. The Psalms are full of references to the harp in the act of worshipping God.
15. The golden bowls full of incense we are told represent the prayers of the saints.
16. Exodus 30:1-3 – “You shall make an altar on which **to burn incense**; you shall make it of acacia wood. **2**A cubit shall be its length, and a cubit its breadth. It shall be square, and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall be of one piece with it. **3**You shall **overlay it with pure gold**, its top and around its sides and its horns. And you shall make a molding of gold around it.”
17. Psalm 141:2 – “Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!” So the response of the Church and all creation to Jesus’ death, resurrection, and ascension is prayer and praise. Remember worship is a major theme in Revelation that is often overlooked.

*Verses 9-14: The Songs*

1. These 3 songs slowly radiate out from the center of the throne.
2. In the first song (verses 9-10), it’s the 4 living creatures and 24 elders singing. This song praises Christ for His worthiness, His salvation, and His preserving them. Notice that Christ redeems a people for God from every tribe, language, and people, and nation. This goes back to my recent sermon on the Word of the Lord drawing in all types of people and people from every ethnicity. Then we see Old Testament language used to describe the whole of God’s elect which is the Church. They are a kingdom and priests and will reign. Vern Poythress calls this a “song of redemption.”
3. In the second song (verses 11-12), it’s an innumerable legion of angels who add their voices in singing. Again the worthiness of Christ is praised and His right to receive what is due to Him is praised.
4. Daniel 7:10 – “A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.”
5. In the third song (verses 13-14), all of creation adds their voice to the praise chorus. This is a doxology. All of creation is ascribing to the Lord blessing, honor, glory, and might for eternity. To this doxology is added the “amen” of the 4 living creatures. The tense of this verb indicates that the living creatures say “Amen” after each doxology. This indicates approval of this universal adoration from those closest to the throne of God to all of the universe.

**Message for Us**

1. “The scroll is God’s comprehensive, detailed, unchangeable plan for His creation. From the falling of a hair from your head, dear believer, to the latest world-shaking events reported in today’s news, everything is on that scroll. The destinies of every atom in the earth, as well as the mighty galaxies of the cosmos, are all there. Nothing is left to chance, for God’s purpose embraces all His creatures and all their actions. Everything is in this book, including all of our human decisions; they, too, are part of God’s plan. There are no indications that God is ever surprised or nonplussed [unsure how to react] by what comes to pass in heaven or on earth. Nothing is missing. Nothing can be changed. Nothing can be added. Nothing is left to chance.” –Joel Beeke
2. “This vision sets forth in dramatic form the central paradox and mystery of the Christian faith. God achieve His triumph and delivered His people, not through the fireworks of military might, but through the weakness of crucifixion. We are to fight our spiritual battles, not with military or political strength, but with endurance, purity, and faithfulness to Christ, even to the point of death.” –Vern Poythress
3. Because God is fully sovereign and has ordained all that happens and because Christ has redeemed you for Himself by His blood, we can confidently and joyfully praise the Triune God for who He is and what He does. Our worship should be dripping with our theology. Worship is God-centered, rather than man-centered.
4. “All things ultimately must glorify God: His will is carried out in the universe. The throne rules. The Lamb reigns. As a result, believers need not fear in times of tribulation, persecution, and anguish.” –William Hendricksen
5. “All things find their fulfillment and the true meaning of their being in a climax of service to God and revelation of His glory.” –Vern Poythress
6. “An old Puritan writer said, ‘Heaven must be in you before you can ever be in heaven.’ Is heaven in you? The Lamb is all the glory in Immanuel’s land. That is how it is in heaven. Is that how it is in your life? Is the Lamb all the glory? Is He at the center? If you do not know and delight in the Lord Jesus Christ here, you would be out of place there.” –Joel Beeke