

Christ in Glory

“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; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”

Revelation 5:9-10

Introduction:

1. We enter this chapter having already learned chapter 4 ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/god-in-glory.pdf>.
2. Why did God create you? For His pleasure (Re 4:11). Why did He save you? For you to know Him (Jn 17:3).
3. A vision of God's glory should greatly affect you, as it did Moses, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul, John, etc.
4. Our goal is to stand in awe of Him (Ps 4:4), delight in Him (Ps 37:4), and hear His call to service (Isaiah 6:8).
5. Prophets of God used signs, symbols, and similitudes, not plain, literal, express language (Hos 12:10; Re 1:1).
6. The words of Isaiah 13:4-16 are ancient Babylon's fall! The similar words of Joel 2:28-32 are only Pentecost!
7. Like explaining a parable, if we give dogmatic meanings to each sign or symbol, we enter into human fantasy.
8. The Parable of the Good Samaritan is one, simple, obvious lesson; forget distracting details (Luke 10:29-37).
9. For more about symbolic language (chaps 10, 11) ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/scripture/knowning-the-scriptures.php>.
10. Revelation 5 has many signs and symbols that we should avoid speculating about e.g. right hand, throne, book, seals, Lion, Root, Lamb, seven horns, seven eyes, four beasts, 24 elders, harps, golden vials, etc., etc.
11. Please do not put a two-edged sword in Jesus' mouth! Please do not allow pooping horses in heaven! Please, heaven is more than a cube 375 or 1500 miles per side! Please reject blood 6' deep in an age of drones!
12. We will foolishly miss God's glory or praise if we get too hung up on difficult or impossible prophetic details.
13. We want to see His glory in word pictures He chose and learn doctrine and praise clear to our understanding.
14. Neither should we reject the word pictures altogether for their prophetic glory or suggestions for gospel value.
15. If we assume a literal interpretation is first and more valuable, we are not different than the foolish futurists.
16. Do not get confused by timing or other details for Jesus gave John general signs, symbols, and similitudes.
17. John did not understand things in this book that took heavenly explanation e.g. no man could open the book.
18. Our relationship to things in heaven is much stronger than you realize (Eph 2:4-7; 3:9-11; Heb 12:22-24).
19. There is a simple distinction between chapters 4 and 5 here, chapter 4 is God's glory; chapter 5 is Christ's!
20. The view here is great of Jesus Christ's glory after His ascension when He is exalted, crowned, and glorified!

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

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne.

- A. John now moved in his inspired recording of a trip to heaven from the general to the more particular.
- B. The last chapter (Rev 4) was about Jehovah on His throne; this chapter (Rev 5) is about Jesus Christ.
- C. Almighty God is an invisible Spirit, as the Bible teaches throughout: these word pictures are for us.
- D. We understand this scene to be symbolic of Jesus Christ's ascension, coronation, and glorification.
 1. The assembled choir will sing a "new song," pertaining to salvation, which must be ascension.
 2. Such a scene as a book that no man can open involving the church could only be after ascension.
 3. A very real event took place at the ascension of Jesus into heaven (Phil 2:5-11; Heb 1:4; 2:9).
 4. For more about Jesus Christ's ascension ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/he-ascended-up-on-high.pdf.
 5. For more of Christ's coronation ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/christ/coronation-of-jesus/sermon.php>.

A book written within and on the backside.

- A. So full of matter was this book that it was not only written on one side of its pages but on both sides.
- B. It is helpful to see a roll of a book as called in the Bible (Ezek 2:9), so a scroll's two sides is unusual.
- C. What is this book? We could imagine many things, but let the immediate and larger context to help.
 1. The seals involve judgments on earth all the way until the second coming of Christ (Rev 6-11).

2. Taking of the book brought forth the new song of redemption from the first choir (Rev 5:8-10).
3. Therefore, we conclude the book is God's decrees for His dealings with the church until eternity.
4. If true, the book of life is related to it or within it by John's weeping and the new salvation song.
5. Further, the book of life is the book of life of the Lamb slain (Re 13:8), the Lamb in context here.
6. The prophecy had opened and repeated a description of things to come (Rev 1:1,3,19; 4:1; 22:6).

Sealed with seven seals.

- A. These seals bring forth judgment on the earth that is described in the next six chapters (Rev 6-11).
- B. The seventh seal brings forth seven angels with seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet is the end.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice.

- A. No matter how strong this angel might have been, he was not sufficient for the task of God's book.
- B. No matter how strong this angel might have been and how loud his voice, there was no answer at all.

Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

- A. The question was asked of the universe, but there was no answer: the thrice-holy God held the book.
- B. There is only one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5; Acts 4:12).

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth.

- A. Men cannot save themselves by any means, for the redemption price is far too precious (Ps 49:6-9).
- B. It is shame that the RCC puts so much of its ambitions and hopes in one man they elect to be pope.

Was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

- A. The book of God's redemption of His children and the judgment of their enemies is above any man.
- B. To know the future of God's dealings with His church and their enemies was purchased by Christ.
- C. Remember to humbly acknowledge your inability to look on God's decrees (Deu 29:29; Ps 131:1-3).

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

And I wept much.

- A. John wept much because the benefits for the elect and the judgments on their enemies was reserved.
- B. There is comfort in this description, for John should have known perfectly well Jesus could open it.
- C. If John wept much, then we should rejoice much, for we know Who was worthy to open the book.

Because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

- A. No man had credentials or worth before a thrice-holy God to participate in redemption or judgment.
- B. We cannot even look on God's decrees properly, let alone open and activate them against the earth.
- C. Remember to humbly acknowledge your inability to look on God's decrees (Deu 29:29; Ps 131:1-3).
- D. There is only one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5; Acts 4:12).

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.

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not.

- A. An elder comforted John, for those in heaven have the greater knowledge than those still upon earth.
- B. The church has the answers, for God has revealed to them sufficient to answer all (II Tim 3:15-17).
- C. The gospel's purpose is to bring good news that a Ransom was found (Job 33:23-24; I Tim 1:15).

Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David.

- A. **Behold.** *Interjection.* The imperative of the verb, used to call attention.
- B. Jesus is *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, for the symbol fits Him perfectly, and the tribe was God's choice.
 - 1. Jesus was foretold as a lion's whelp of Judah by Jacob on his deathbed (Gen 49:9-10; Nu 24:9).
 - 2. A lion's whelp is a young lion, which we would now call a cub, but was a whelp then (Na 2:11).
 - 3. Jesus is of the tribe of Judah, as Melchisedec priesthood proves (Heb 7:14; Mat 1:2; Luke 3:33).
 - 4. Why is Jesus called a Lion here? Because of its boldness, fearlessness, leadership, and victory.
- C. Jesus is the *Root of David*, for the symbol fits Him perfectly, and the specific man was God's choice.
 - 1. How is Jesus the *Root of David*? He grew from the dead remains of Jesse and David (Is 11:1,10).
 - 2. Jesse and David were the trees that left dying roots in the ground from whence came the Christ.
 - 3. This could mean Jesus is David's Root in His divine nature, as his Lord (Ps 110:1; Matt 22:41-46), but we choose the simpler and more straightforward interpretation based on Isaiah 11.
 - 4. Praise the God of heaven, this title is also used for the sake of us Gentile believers (Rom 15:12).
 - 5. Let all sinners that love God take comfort in God liking David (I Chron 28:4; Hebrews 11:32).

Hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

- A. Jesus finished the work and won the victory in the battle God sent Him to wage (I John 3:8).
- B. **Prevail.** To be superior in strength or influence; to have or gain the superiority or advantage; to get the better, gain the mastery or ascendancy; to be victorious.
- C. We understand this sense of the word by John's use of the same word in a negative sense (Rev 12:8).
- D. Jesus won! He cried, It is finished! He did all the Father asked against sin, death, devil, and hell!
- E. The only way to be able to open the book held by the thrice-holy God was to defeat death and sin!

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

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

- A. For meaning of these symbols, see "God in Glory," ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/god-in-glory.pdf>.
- B. This new Person is right in the middle of everything, for He must be to take the book from Jehovah.
- C. This moment is spectacular to consider and meditate upon, for it is the appearing of Jesus in heaven.
 - 1. Until this moment Abraham had not seen his Seed and David had not yet seen his promised Son!
 - 2. Until this moment the forgiveness of sins was through the forbearance of God in view of Christ.

Stood a Lamb as it had been slain.

- A. The visual symbol here is what appeared to John as a Lamb with the evidence of having been killed.
- B. The Lamb thus observed was standing, not lying as if still dead, but with the evidence of prior death.

- C. We know exactly Who this is, and the symbols are for greater appreciation of the heavenly scene.
- D. This is Jesus Christ with His glorified body that had glorified wounds present indicating fatal results.
- E. Jesus had shown Thomas His wounds that had healed but were still very accessible (John 20:26-28).
- F. Why is Jesus called a Lamb here? For that was common with John, as it referred to His sacrifice.
- G. Though the blood of Christ was offered once for all, yet there is clear visual evidence of it here.

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

- A. It is important to observe that the Holy Spirit of God is called the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6).
- B. These seven symbols are the same as the seven lamps of fire John had recently seen (Rev 4:5).
- C. These seven Spirits of God are also mentioned in Revelation 1:4; 3:1; and 5:6. For comparative purposes, you can also see them symbolically in Zechariah 3:9 and 4:10.
- D. Some think these seven Spirits are angels or other created spirits, but we do not for several reasons.
- E. For a full explanation why this is a seven-fold symbol for the Holy Spirit, see notes on Revelation 4.

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

And he came and took.

- A. Observe the great boldness – He knew with confidence that He was accepted by the thrice-holy God.
- B. Observe the easy success – there was no resisting by Jehovah of His bold approach to take the book.
- C. God made Jesus Christ perfect for this great work of redemption from sin, death, devil, and hell.

The book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

- A. Do you grasp the unapproachable nature of Jehovah? Recall Isaiah's great conviction (Isaiah 6:1-8).
- B. A vision of God in glory greatly affects men, as it did Moses, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul, etc.
- C. God has put all authority in the hands of Jesus Christ, thus His right to the book of God's decrees.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts 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.

And when he had taken the book.

- A. This momentous transaction is one of the greatest events in the history of the universe. Consider it.
- B. All the benefits for all God's elect of both Jews and Gentiles depended on Jesus opening the book.
- C. God could have stopped Him, and the choirs had remained silent, but God did not at all resist Him.

The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb.

- A. It is usual for the two different parties to be related or connected (Re 4:9-10; 5:14; 7:11; 14:3; 19:4).
- B. They are two different symbols of the adopted family of God, which is more important than details.
- C. The angels did not fall and worship, distinguishing the beasts, though they would later (Re 7:11-12).
- D. Representing the whole church of God, we cannot ignore or neglect each member of that church.

Having every one of them harps.

- A. We conclude from the previous clause that both the beasts and the elders fell down before the Lamb.
- B. An issue is key – are both beasts and elders the antecedent to the pronouns in this and the next verse?

1. Without any grammatical distinction, we assume beasts and elders are intended by the pronouns.
 2. We do not have doctrinal reason to separate the two, though beasts with harps sounds unusual.
- C. Harps are instruments of praise, so embrace the idea that being in Christ's presence produces praise.

And golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

- A. Golden vials here are instruments of prayer, for they convert the prayers of saints into sweet aromas.
- B. We conclude based on the previous clause that both beasts and elders are involved in this worship.
- C. We often mention in our prayers that we hope prayer and worship come up as sweet incense to God.
- D. Let this be strong motivation to your praying, for you should see your prayers rising up before God.

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;

And they sung a new song, saying.

- A. We conclude from the previous verse that both the beasts and the elders fell down before the Lamb.
- B. An issue is key – are both beasts and elders the antecedent to pronouns here and the previous verse?
 1. Without any grammatical distinction, we assume beasts and elders are intended by the pronouns.
 2. We do not have doctrinal reason to separate the two, though beasts with harps sounds confusing.
- C. If we assume the beasts are not singing here, yet they are down before the Lamb during the singing.
- D. Therefore, we conclude that both symbols, beasts and elders, represent all the adopted sons of God.
- E. This song has not been sung in heaven before, thus we determine this event is after His ascension.
- F. What are the great saints of God thinking at this moment? Abel? Noah? Abraham? Moses? David?
- G. What effect does it have on you to consider this stupendous event of our Lord and Christ in heaven?

Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof.

- A. The view in heaven of taking the book from the thrice-holy God shows Jesus approved as worthy.
- B. But not only is He clearly worthy, in response to the strong angel's proclamation, there is a reason!
- C. What makes Jesus worthy in the sight of the thrice-holy God? His impeccable work of redemption.
 1. For this reason God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name above others (Phil 2:5-11).
 2. For this reason He may sit down at God's right hand and receive divine worship (Heb 1:3-4).

For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.

- A. The basis for this scene is blood redemption of Christ's cross and then resurrection and ascension.
- B. It is clear the book has to do with the people of God, or the connection to salvation makes no sense.
- C. The book of life is either included in the book or closely related by virtue of the Lamb slain here.
- D. Further, the book of life is the book of life of the Lamb slain (Re 13:8), the Lamb in context here.

Out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

- A. The beasts and elders admit their broad humanity, proving they represent the whole church of God.
- B. The choir previously worshipped only God for His sovereign creation for His pleasure (Rev 4:11).
- C. Now the choir worships the Lamb for His sovereign salvation out of every human group (Re 5:9-10).
- D. We are twice His ... once by creation ... then by salvation ... we owe Him all things (I Co 6:19-20).

10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests.

- A. This is the extent of Jesus Christ's sacrifice that the church of God is right up next to God Himself!
- B. Any child of God can go boldly into the presence of thrice-holy Jehovah by Jesus Christ (He 10:19).
- C. This fact and status of redemption has already been made and will be repeated (Rev 1:6; 20:4-6).

And we shall reign on the earth.

- A. The saints shall judge both the world and the angels, which is quite an act of reigning (I Cor 6:1-3).
- B. The victorious sight of Revelation 19:11-16 includes the armies of heaven on their own white horses.

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;

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels.

- A. This is the second choir or group in John's vision to break forth into praise unto the Lamb of God.
- B. He had heard one strong angel ask the question (5:2), but now they all answered back in praise.

Round about the throne and the beasts and the elders.

- A. Notice the order here – the beasts and elders are next to the throne, and the angels are outside them.
- B. We are the sons of God by Christ's adoptive work, and the angels are our servants (Heb 1:13-14).

And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.

- A. Here we have 100 million angels with millions added to that number in John's prophetic language.
- B. Paul saw the church triumphant in heaven with an innumerable company of angels (Heb 12:22-24).

12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

- A. This song or speech is by angels, the next level of creature God created for His praise and worship.
- B. They speak to the death of the Lamb of God, but they cannot include themselves like the saints did!
- C. They desire to look into these things, for Jesus Christ died for us, not them (I Pet 1:12; Heb 2:16).

To receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

- A. We cannot literally give these things to God, but Jesus Christ had not yet formally received them.
- B. Though there are *seven* gifts and rewards of Jesus listed here, we do not draw any strong application.
- C. This is the promotion of Jesus Christ, Who had been made lower, but was now over the angelic host.
- D. For angels to worship the Man Christ Jesus in such a way is a stupendous promotion of Him by God.

13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying.

- A. This song or speech is by all other creatures not saints or angels, the next level created for praise.
- B. It is not uncommon for the prophets to speak of irrational or inanimate creatures worshipping God.
- C. Prophets spoke of such worship by irrational creatures and inanimate matter (Ps 96:10-13; 65:13).
- D. Jesus in the future will deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption (Rom 8:17-23).
- E. The presence of Jesus as King on earth would have brought forth praise from rocks (Luke 19:37-40).

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne.

- A. We cannot give these things to Almighty God, nor is He lacking any of them, but we magnify them!
- B. Our praise identifies them, declares Him with infinite degree of them, and exalts value and extent.

And unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

- A. The Lamb of God is now worshipped by creation in conjunction with God, only God is above Him.
- B. He shall be subordinate to God for eternity, which reminds us of His humanity (I Cor 15:28).

14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

And the four beasts said, Amen.

- A. Whatever they represent, they conclude the coronation assembly with affirmation of its truthfulness.
- B. If they are the ministers of God as our fathers in the faith, they call the proceedings here to a close.

And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

- A. As is common (4:9-11; 5:8-9), the beasts and elders are united in worship of God and the Lamb.
- B. If these beasts, elders, angels, and all creatures worship God and Jesus in such a way, what of you?

Conclusion:

1. The big picture of this inspired view of Christ's victory is more important than getting distracted with details.
2. This is the arrival of Jesus, victorious over death and sin, to begin His sovereign reign with and for His saints.
3. Why did God create you? For His pleasure (Re 4:11). Why did He save you? For you to know Him (Jn 17:3).
4. A vision of God's glory should greatly affect you, as it did Moses, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul, John, etc.
5. Our goal is to stand in awe of Him (Ps 4:4), delight in Him (Ps 37:4), and hear His call to service (Isaiah 6:8).
6. You must get still in order to have a vision of God (Ps 46:10), and then you must meditate on it (Psalm 4:4).
7. Moses asked to see God's glory (Ex 33:18); Asaph went into the sanctuary (Ps 73:27); John was in the Holy Spirit (Rev 1:10). What will you do with prayer, the Bible, singing, or brethren to keep a vision fresh in mind?

For Further Study:

1. Consider these website documents or sermons about Jesus Christ ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/christ/christ.php>.
2. Consider these sermons about Jesus Christ our Lord ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/christ.php>.