

14. The Lamb Is Worthy to Open the Scroll

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why John wept when he thought that there was no one worthy to open the scroll that would redeem the earth from the consequences of sin. Then, he learned that the Lamb of God would open the scroll. In this topic, we will see that all in heaven and the creatures of the earth will rejoice for the fact that Christ is worthy to open the scroll.

In Revelation 5:8-10, we read, “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” We saw in an earlier topic that the twenty-four elders are the church after it is taken to heaven. Here, we see that the four living creatures will be joined by the church as we fall down together to worship Christ, the Lamb of God.

We see that the church will have two things as we fall down in worship of Christ. We will have harps and golden bowls of incense. This verse immediately explains that the bowls of incense are the prayers of the saints. Harps were used by the Jews, in the Old Testament, as they sang songs to the Lord. Psalm 33:1-3 illustrates the fact that the Jews sang Psalms of praise to God accompanied by the harp. Those verses say, “Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous! *For* praise from the upright is beautiful. Praise the LORD with the harp; make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy.”

The prophets also played harps at times when they prophesied. This is illustrated in 1 Samuel 10:5-6, where we read: “After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying. Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.” This prophecy was fulfilled later that same day as 1 Samuel 10:10 says, “When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.” Instead, in Revelation 5, and several times later in the book, we see that the songs will be songs of praise for the fact that the Lord has answered our prayers.

Here, the four creatures and the church will sing a song speaking about the fact that Christ is worthy to take the scroll and open its seals. This song also tells why Christ is worthy. He is worthy to open the seals because He was killed to purchase our salvation by His blood and bring us back into relationship with the Father as His children. This large group that will be rejoicing in song will include people from every tribe, language (dialect), ethnic group and nation. We also see that Christ made us kings and priests (a kingdom of priests). 1 Peter 2:9-10 says, “But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a

people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.” As a royal priesthood we have the right to enter into the presence of God. We also see that we will reign with Christ on the earth.

We see the rejoicing of angels as they join the singing and worship. Revelation 5:11-12 says, “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!’” The word translated “ten thousand times ten thousand” means *innumerable or beyond what can be counted by man*. That is the way the word is translated in Hebrews 12:22, where we read: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels.” They could not sing about the fact that Christ was slain for them but they certainly could join in singing about the fact that He is worthy.

We see that as they join together with the church that we, together with the angels, will sing about seven things that Christ is worthy to receive. First, Christ is worthy to receive praise for His power. In Hebrews 1:3, we read, “Who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Here, we see that Christ holds all things together by the word of His power. Second, Christ is worthy to receive praise for His riches. Ephesians 1:7 says, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” Here, we see that the riches of Christ are very different from the riches of the world. His riches are shown by His grace.

Third, Christ is worthy to receive praise for His wisdom. 1 Corinthians 1:30 says, “But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” Then, James 3:17 adds, “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” His wisdom is perfect. Fourth, Christ is worthy to receive praise for His strength. 1 Peter 4:11 says, “If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” In this verse, we see that we are to serve in the strength (ability) which God supplies through Christ Jesus.

Fifth, Christ is worthy to receive honor. 1 Timothy 1:17 says, “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” Sixth, Christ is worthy to receive glory. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says, “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Here, we see that Christ is transforming us into His image. Seventh, Christ is worthy to receive blessing because He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. Ephesians 1:3 says, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ.”

We go on to see that this rejoicing is going to come from every creature in heaven and on earth. Revelation 5:13-14 says, “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, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power *be* to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’ Then the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.” Here, we see that the whole creation of God is looking forward to the fact that Christ is worthy to set the creation free from the results of sin.

Genesis 3:17 says, “Then to Adam He said, ‘Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: ‘Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat *of* it all the days of your life.’” Here, we see that everything in the creation of God was affected by the sin of man. As a result, the creation and every creature has been waiting for the One who would redeem the world from the consequences of sin. Romans 8:20-22 says, “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.” This is why every creature will join in the rejoicing because Christ is worthy to redeem His creation.

We then see the length of time that this rejoicing will continue. We see that it will continue forever and ever. This speaks of an unbroken rejoicing that will last for all eternity. Here, we see that the angels, the church along with the whole creation are looking forward to the time beyond the return of Christ to rule on the earth and the final judgments. We see that they are looking to eternity when the results of sin will no longer be present. Revelation 21:1-4 says, “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’” Here, we see that all of the consequences of sin will be removed for all eternity.

This is why we can look forward to the time beyond the final judgments. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand why Christ is worthy to open the seals and the eternal results of His redemption. We also want to help our children learn to explain to others why Christ is worthy. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.