

Revelation #15

October 16, 2022

Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon

Today's message: **Revelation chapters 4 and 5. "Part 4: The Throne Room of God: The Lion," from Revelation 5:2-5!**

Introduction: The Big Picture: In the throne room of God the Father, we see the Father holding the scroll, then the Lamb taking the scroll, signaling the beginning of, 1) the judgments of God in the Day of the Lord; 2) the final redemption of His Church; and, 3) the reclamation of the earth in preparation for the uncontested rule of God in the New Heaven and the New Earth.

Last week we spent our time drawing from 5:1 concerning the scroll. This week we will spend our time drawing from 5:2-5 concerning the discovery of the One who is worthy to take the scroll from the Father's hand and open it! Behold the Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

(5:2-5) The Lion

- I. (5:2) **The Search** (for One Who is Worthy to open the scroll.)
 - A. An angel begins the search.
 1. No one knows who this angel is.
 - a) Just a voice calling into the heavens.
 - b) Reminds me of John the Baptist: "The voice of one calling..."
 - (1) It is not the voice or the one who is speaking that should arouse our curiosity, but the one of whom the voice speaks.
 2. The voice is loud, doubtless reverberating, filling the throne room of heaven for every being to hear and respond to the divine challenge.
 - B. The challenge: "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"
 1. Remember: The scroll is the title and deed to the earth.
 2. Remember: It is the rightful inheritance of the Lord Jesus Christ!
 3. Remember: It is both a scroll of doom and judgment, and of redemption.
 - a) The scroll outlines how the Lord will regain His inheritance through judgment.

b) The scroll also certifies that the purchase price has been paid and approved. Yes, the Lord finally possesses what He purchased through His blood and secured it by His resurrection from the dead!

(1) Having triumphed over sin and death He expels from the earth Satan and all those belonging to him.

C. The silence: No one moves. Heaven is silent.

1. Notice: No one speaks up. No one is able. No one is up to the task.
2. MacArthur: "As the echoes of his cry recede there is only silence. The powerful archangels Michael and Gabriel do not answer. Uncounted thousands of other angels remain silent. All the righteous dead of all the ages, including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Peter and the rest of the apostles, Paul, and all the others from the church age, say nothing."

D. What are the necessary qualifications for **one** to be found worthy to open the scroll?¹

1. That **one** must have **perfect judgment**.
 - a) Only a **perfect judge** can judge perfectly.
 - b) He must extend perfect mercy without flinching from exacting perfect justice. (Dt.7:16; 13:8; 19:13,21; 25:12; Is.11:4-5; John 7:24)
 - (1) Sinful humanity fails to uphold God's standards.
 - c) Only the **perfect judge** will refuse to alter God's standards, which condemn sin.
 - d) Favoritism and laxity cannot be found in the **perfect judge**, for He is the perfect administrator of justice in a world dominated by injustice.
 - e) Only **One** qualifies, and that **one** is the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (1) Revelation 19:11: He is the **One** who is **Faithful** and **True**.
2. That **one** must be fully human. Not just any human but a perfect human.
 - a) Dominion of the earth was first given to Adam (Genesis 1:26-28).
 - (1) Yet he lost dominion of the earth to Satan b/c of sin.
 - (a) **Luke 4:5-6** quotes Satan as saying to Jesus that all the kingdoms and splendor of the earth had been given to him and that he can give it to whomever he chooses.
 - (i) Adam gave up tenant possession of the earth when he sinned.
 - b) A man sinned and lost dominion. And recovery of dominion must be regained by a man; but not just any man: a perfect man.
 - (1) A man without sin (2 Cor.5:21; 1 Pe 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5)

¹ The following four points of qualification are detailed in Tony Garland's commentary of Rev.5:2

- c) Satan “usurped tenant possession of the earth away from its original tenant and has been exercising administrative control of the world’s system against God ever since.”
 - d) Only **one** qualifies, and that is the sinless God-man Jesus Christ!
3. That **one** must win the **right of possession**
- a) Christ, the God-man, the sinless man, also called the last Adam, paid the redemption price for the world lost to the ravages of sin. He did this through the shedding of His own precious, innocent blood. (Rev. 5:6,9)
 - b) Whereas the first Adam sinned and gave possession and dominion of the earth and the world’s system to Satan, Christ broke the dominion, power and authority of Satan by making “a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross!” (**Colossians 2:13-15**)
 - c) Only **one** qualifies to have the right of possession: the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. That **one** must have the **ability to possess**.
- a) “The *right* to possess is meaningless without the *might* to possess.
 - b) That **one** who is worthy must not only have authority to make known God’s plan to recover what was lost, but to set the plan in motion..
 - c) Only **one** could set the plan in motion, the Lord Jesus Christ!
5. **Note: Only the Lord Jesus Christ has the ability and authority to both carry out perfect judgment and grant perfect, unadulterated mercy!**

II. (5:3-4) **The Sorrow** (when no one is found worthy to open the scroll.)

- A. John’s shocking realization at the moment: “No one... could open the scroll or look at it.”
 - 1. This is an indictment of humanity.
 - 2. “All men, except [for Jesus Christ, the Son of God,] are born of Adam and lost in sin, and unqualified to bring about redemption (1 Kings 8:46 Is. 64:6; Rom. 3:9, 23).”²
 - 3. Ever since the fall of Adam, all the efforts of mankind to rule and establish a just world have been subject to Satan’s dominion.
 - a) All men, since Adam, have been subject to Satan’s wicked rule
 - (1) See Romans 5:12ff and Acts 17:26.
- B. The Result of the Fall of Adam (Fallen from exercising dominion on the earth.)
 - 1. And ever since Satan was thrown out of heaven (Luke 10:18) and ever since he was handed dominion of the earth by Adam upon his sin, Satan has inspired many wicked men to dominate the world through wickedness.

² Garland

- a) MacArthur notes: "A host of humans have [tried] their hand at conquest, men such as Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Alexander the Great, the emperors of Rome, Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Lenin, Stalin and Hitler."
 - (1) Every one of them failed and left in their wake of destruction the deaths of hundreds of millions of people!
 - 2. And before Christ comes and squashes the Satanic rebellion, Satan will set forth the most evil and wicked rule of all, the final Antichrist!
 - 3. Only **one** person "has the right, the power, and the authority to rule the earth: the Lord Jesus Christ." When He comes He will rule in righteousness and throw out all wickedness and sin, casting them and the devil into the Lake of Fire!
- C. (5:4) John's sorrow. At that very moment, as the full weight of what John say fell upon him, John writes, "I wept and wept because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or look inside."
- 1. Why John wept
 - a) Because if the scroll could not be opened there was no future hope of redemption; mankind would suffer the ravages of sin forever!
 - b) John knew that if the scroll was not claimed and opened then sin, sorrow, sickness, murder, death and everything that God created for good would continue under Satan's dominion forever!
 - c) John knew that if the scroll was not claimed and opened by someone worthy to open it, then all the hope promised by God through the prophets would come to nothing, and men would die without God and without hope in the world. (see **Ephesians 2:12**)
 - 2. But for the cross of Christ!
 - a) If God had not sent His Son to live for our righteousness and die for our redemption the world and mankind would be lost forever!
 - (1) Lost in an eternity of darkness, doom and despair and the pain of separation from God our creator.
 - b) But God did send His Son into the world to break the power and hold of Satan over this world and men.
 - c) Because of the Christ on His cross we have redemption through faith in His blood.
 - (1) Think of the song, "And Can It Be" by Charles Wesley
 - (2) Christ is *The Overcomer*! And through faith in Him we overcome by the Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ!

- d) The Cross became salvation for us who believe and the damnation of “him... that usurper, that interloper, that intruder, that alien, that stranger, that dragon, that serpent, that Satan-devil!”³
- e) The **one** who is worthy is Jesus Christ, the Overcomer!

III. (5:5) **The Sovereign** (ruler, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah is revealed as triumphant and is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.)

- A. “Do not keep weeping!”
 - 1. One of the elders speaks to John.
- B. “See! The Lion of the tribe of Judah”
 - 1. This title of Jesus is a magnificent and telling title directly from Jacob’s blessing upon his son, Judah.
 - a) Genesis 49:8-10: “Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down to you. You are a lion’s cub, O Judah; You return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him? The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to who it belongs and the obedience of the nations will be his.”
 - (1) He will be strong and an overpowering ruler!
 - b) His conquest will be final as He is described as having been given the necks of his enemies
 - (1) Joshua 10:24 describes a sound and final victory as such with the enemies necks under the feet of the victors.
 - 2. Remember, the Lion first came as a Lamb of sacrifice. And through His victory over sin and death (cross and resurrection) He became the rightful and only conqueror of Satan who holds dominion on the earth!
- C. “The Root of David”
 - 1. Meaning that Messiah is the promised offspring of David promised to David in 2 Samuel 7. That covenant promise of God to David was the certain guarantee that David would have a son who would sit on a forever throne, ruling over a forever kingdom as the forever King!
 - a) See 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 11:1, 10; Psalm 89:33-37
 - 2. God’s promise to David was that His overspring would establish the throne of David on the earth.

³ W.A. Criswell, *Expository Sermons on Revelation* (Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 1969), 3:69-70

- a) There is no throne of David on the earth yet, but Revelation 5:5 prepares us for this throne by announcing that the Lion has prevailed. And Revelation 20:4-6 assures us that when the Lion has completed His work the throne of David will be established:

(1) Rev. 20:4-6 speaks of the rule of Christ on His throne on earth.

(a) v4d: "They came to life and reigned with Christ..."

(b) v6b: "...of Christ and will reign with Him..."

- b) The Root of David: Satan has worked his wicked schemes to thwart God's promise to David. His lineage was cut down like a tree. But never terminated. Jesus is that root that sprung up at the proper time!

(1) Romans 1:3 speaks of Messiah's human origin by reminding us that Messiah was a direct descendant of David. Both Mary and Joseph's lineage could be traced back to David!

D. "Has triumphed" some versions say, "prevailed"

1. John 16:33: "I have overcome the world"
 - a) He defeated sin at the cross (Romans 8:3)
 - b) At the cross He defeated death (Hebrews 2:14-15)
 - c) At the cross He defeated all the forces of Hell (Col. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:18-19)
2. He is the Sovereign King and will overthrow His enemies at the proper time (Rev. 6-20)
 - a) Renald Showers: "Christ's death sealed Satan's doom. At the proper time, determined sovereignly by God, Christ will exercise the right He gained at the cross to throw out the usurper.
 - b) His victory assures us that the throne is rightfully His! (see **Gen.49:10**)

E. "To open the scroll and its seven seals"

1. He has been given sovereign authority to open the scroll and the seven seals.
 - a) Why? Because as Revelation 3:7 tells us, "He holds the key of David"
 - b) Judgment has been given to Him (**John 5:22-27**)
2. He has authority to open the seven seals, meaning that through these many judgments He will retake what He purchased on the cross!
3. We must read the rest of the book of Revelation as Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah exercising His authority and power to:
 - a) Overthrow Satan's kingdom, and
 - b) To Set up God's kingdom on earth!
4. In fact, the final effort of Satan to challenge the right of our Lord to take possession of what He purchased— we see the last challenge ensue in

Revelation 19:11-20:3, when Satan is finally defeated and cast into the Lake of Fire.

IV. Application:

- A. Christ has the power to destroy the strongholds and sin blocks in your life. He is the Lion!