

Sent Church - Lake Mary

WORSHIP SERVICE - 9.5.2021

A SCROLL, A SAVIOR, A SONG

I. INTRODUCTION

MAIN POINT: Christ alone is the only one worthy to bring judgment and salvation and he is the only one worthy of our worship.

Revelation 5:1-4

Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

II. A SCROLL

1. THE MEANING OF THE SCROLL

- This next scene introduces a problem--no one in God's creation is found to be worthy to open the scroll and break its seals.
- Keep in mind this is symbolic/figurative language.
- We have to ask, "What do the symbols mean?"

- A scroll was parchment that was used for writing, and typically the writing would be on one side and the parchment would then be rolled up, with the writing on the inside. A scroll would be referred to as a book.
- A wax seal was applied to keep the scroll from being opened accidentally or to ensure that only the intended reader would be opening it to read its contents.
- This scroll is full of writing. No more could be written on it.
- This image comes from various OT passage.
- **Isaiah 29:11** And the vision of all this has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed.
- **Daniel 12:4a** But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end.
- The prophetic visions Daniel was given were sealed until the time of the end, the latter days, which Christ inaugurated.
- **Ezekiel 2:9-10** And when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. 10 And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe.
- The scroll in Ezekiel's vision contained lamentation and mourning and woe. It was God's judgments.

- Take note of where the scroll is — it is in the right hand of God.

- In Scripture, the right hand of God always symbolizes his power, authority and sovereignty.
 - **Exodus 15:6** Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.
 - It also indicates his power to bring salvation.
 - **Psalms 20:6** Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.
-
- The scroll also has been sealed with seven seals. Seven is the number of fullness, completeness, so what this scroll contains by virtue of its seven seals and writing on the front and the back, is the complete divine decrees of God.
 - The scroll contains the whole of God's purposes and plans for the entire universe and his creatures.
 - **Joel R. Beeke**, Revelation Commentary, "*The destinies of every atom on the earth, as well as the mighty galaxies of the cosmos, are all there.*"
 - Everything God has purposed to do according to the counsel of his will is contained in the scroll. That is what the scroll symbolizes.
-
- Of God's plan, his purposes, his decrees, his will, Scripture teaches:
 - **Is. 46:8-11** "Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, 9 remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' 11 calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.
 - **Ephesians 1:11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,
 - **LBC1689 3:1** From all eternity God decreed everything that occurs, without reference to anything outside himself. He did this by the perfectly wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably. Yet God did this in such a way that he is neither the author of sin nor has fellowship with any in their sin. This decree does not violate the will of the creature or take away the free working or contingency of second causes. On the contrary, these are established by God's decree. In this decree God's wisdom is displayed in directing all things, and his power and faithfulness are demonstrated in accomplishing his decree.
 - Don't be confused about his glorious truth about the divine decrees of God.
 - He does not, in his foreknowledge, see everything that is going to happen, look at all of the data, considers all of the choices of man, and then draw up plans based on that knowledge.
 - That's NOT what Scripture teaches. It is the opposite of that.
 - God has determined his plans and purposes from before the foundation of the world.
 - He knows what will happen because he has decreed what will happen.
-
- That is the significance of the symbolism of this scroll—God's eternal decrees.
 - Things may seem like they are getting a lot worse. And they may be. But it is not out of God's control. God is on his throne.
 - Things may get increasingly difficult for the church, but fear not, God has a plan.
 - This is a comfort to the people of God.
 - The wicked plot and schemes of man serve the purposes of God.
 - Chaos and confusion may seem to be reigning in the world, but take heart, there is a divinely ordered plan which cannot be thwarted and which has already begun to be fulfilled.

2. THE ANGELIC PROCLAMATION

- Next John sees a mighty angel who with a thunderous voice proclaims, “*Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?*”
 - Who is worthy? What he’s asking is, who is qualified, who has the authority, who has the ability to open the scroll and break its seals.
 - The answer is unanimous, vs3, No one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it.
 - Not only could they not open it, no one knows its contents. No one can fathom the divine will of God.
 - No one to execute the divine plan of God, no one to carry out his purposes for the universe.
 - John is overcome with emotion. NO one is found worthy. How will God’s plan unfold?
 - Sin has made it impossible for man to be able to do this and sin introduced death and brokenness to the entirety of God’s creation.
 - No descendant of Adam is worthy. None equal to the task because of the fall.
 - Unless God’s purposes are accomplished, there is no hope for a reversal of the curse.
- Have you given any thought to this reality? That apart from Christ, there is absolutely no hope for humanity. No hope for this world.

III. A SAVIOR

Revelation 5:5-7 And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.” 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne.

- John was overwhelmed at the thought that there was no one worthy to open the scroll and break the seals.
- Just then, one of the elders says to him, “*Weep no more...the Lion of the Tribe of Judah has conquered so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.*”
- Good News! There is One who can open the scroll. There is One who is worthy!
- Who is this worthy one? The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David.
- These are messianic titles taken from Gen. 49 and Isaiah 11.
- The lion is a symbol of power, strength, and majesty.
- The Lion has conquered. He has overcome and can open the scroll and break its seals.
- How has the Lion conquered? How is he worthy?
- John doesn’t see a lion, he sees that between the throne and the other heavenly creatures, is a Lamb.
- He sees that the lamb is standing, but it bears the marks as if it has been slain.
- Literally it can be stated, “*a lamb standing as slain*”.
- Grammatically it expresses a present and ongoing reality or state. He is both standing and slain.
- The image of the lamb is an allusion to the Passover lamb who was sacrificed in the Exodus account that spared God’s people from the last plague.

- Isaiah also prophesied that Messiah would be “like a lamb led to the slaughter.” (Is. 53)
- John’s favorite title for Christ in Revelation is “Lamb”. He uses it 28 times to refer to Jesus.
- John first hears that title for Jesus from John the Baptist, “*Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*” (John 1:29)
- These symbols tell us how the Lion conquered—by being slaughtered as a lamb.
- The image of the lamb standing as slain, expresses the ongoing effects of the victory he obtained through his redemptive death.
- He died and he is alive! He suffered for our salvation, but rose again in victory. He conquered death and stands before the throne of God.
- **1 Peter 1:18-20** knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you.
- Christ the God-man is worthy!
- Because he conquered, the Lamb has been given all power and authority, that is why he is worthy.
- That is the meaning of the seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God.
- He has the fullness of the power of the Spirit of God.
- Luke 4:1 Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit.
- He has all authority - seven horns
- Matt 28:18 “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”
- He has total omniscience - seven eyes. His judgment are true and right.
- He has the fullness of the Spirit - seven spirits of God.
- The Spirit is sent out into all the earth to carry out the sovereign plan of the Lord.
- The lamb is standing because he is victorious, but also as a symbol that the work of salvation is NOT YET complete.
- He takes the scroll from the right hand of the One seated on the throne.
- And he takes his place at the right hand of the Father.
- **Hebrews 1:3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
- This is the gospel right here in Revelation.

IV. A SONG

Revelation 5:8-14 And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” 14 And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

- At the revelation of the One who is worthy—all of heaven and all of creation falls down before the Lamb and erupts in worship and bows before him in submission.
- Heaven rejoices, the created order rejoices, because all that is contained in the scroll will be executed and fulfilled.
- The scroll is now in the hand of the conquering Lion and the sacrificial Lamb.
- His possession of the scroll is a guarantee of the final victory of the people of God and the complete triumph of the Kingdom of God.

THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED

- A note about the new song that the 24 elders sing, they represent the entirety of the church.
- They are singing what has been called the “song of the redeemed.”
- It is a much deeper and more profound song than the song that the angels sing or that creation sings.
- Those who have been ransomed from their sins, whose sins have been washed by the blood of the Lamb, worship the Lamb from a more intimate and deeper place than even the angels or any of the other magnificent creatures in the heavenly realm.
- Jesus Christ has worshipers from every tribe and language and people and nation.
- There are redeemed saints from every people group.
- Regardless of ethnicity, Christ has redeemed for himself and saved some from the people groups of the world.
- His redemption did not merely make it possible for people to be saved, his redemption accomplished salvation for a particular group of people—the people of God!

CONCLUSION

- Have you trusted in Christ’s blood alone for your salvation?
- There is no salvation apart from Christ. No other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.
- This is God’s plan! There is no other! Jesus the Lamb of God who offered himself as the sacrifice for our sins.
- There are two emotions that are clear from this heavenly vision..weeping and worship.
- They are also the only two possibilities that someone could experience at death.
- Fall down before him now in humble worship and submission, or fall down before him then as he passes sentence on your guilt.
- Confess him now as your Savior or confess him then as your Judge.
- **Philippians 2:10-11** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- **He is Worthy! He is the Lamb of God!**