



Citadel Of Faith Covenant Church

September 14, 2016

A|Ω
ALPHA AND OMEGA

Modern technology has redefined the way we live. The smartphone has revolutionized the convenience and ease in which we are able to get things done. From the simplicity of typing in an address and having verbal turn by turn directions, to speaking and asking Google to call the nearest pizza place to my current location. But one of the features which has personalized and created even greater security than we could have ever imagined is the home screen button which opens the iPhone at the mere touch of your fingerprint. The device captures your fingerprint and thus only allows the device to be opened if your fingerprint is recognized. Great and mighty men can attempt to open it or even a family member needing to access the phone for an emergency will be locked out because their fingerprint is not authorized to unlock the phone. This is what we see playing out in heaven in Revelation chapter 5. Let's clarify something that we noticed in chapter four. We saw one sitting on the throne whose appearance was like that of jasper and ruby. (Rev. 4:3) From the throne came flashes of lighting and peals of thunder (Rev. 4:5). This is a vision of God sitting on the throne. Revelation shows us another glimpse of the manifold nature of God. He is "God in three persons", (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). As we noticed God sitting on the throne in chapter four, we see Jesus in the midst of the throne room in chapter five. As John's eyes gaze at the splendor of the site (rainbows, four beasts with eyes everywhere, twenty four thrones and elders, a sea of glass). It surpasses any of the scenes we see of Asgard in the Thor Marvel movies! But it doesn't stop there. When we get to chapter five, John notices in God's right hand there is a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. The writing within and without symbolizes the weight of what is written within. There are seven principle parts within this scroll, thus seven seals. As mentioned previously, a seal represented an authorized document or communication. Only someone authorized could "break" or open a seal placed on a document, building, etc. (the seal placed on Jesus' tomb. {Matt. 27:66}) Rev. 5:2 has a strong angel who posed a question heralded throughout both the heavens and the earth. "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?". In other words, who is worthy to finally make things right in the heavens and the earth? Who has the authority to execute God's plan for complete redemption of the earth and mankind. Who will set things right? The text says no one in heaven, on earth, or under the earth could open the scroll. No one in heaven, hell, earth nor anywhere could open this document detailing the setting aright of the fallen world. No self-acutalizing New Age thinker, no popular politician or global leader, no oil baron or media mogul. No scholar, not Mary, not the apostles, NO ONE! If no one has the authority to open this document, then we can safely assume that no one has the power to truly be Lord of all, but whoever can open this scroll!



John began to weep. Knowing that the contents within the scroll were critical, it saddened him that no one could open it. It resided in the hand of God, yet it remained sealed. This indicates that the solution to all things are in the hand of God, yet His means of executing lie often outside of himself. (The plan of salvation, in the person of Jesus and the witness of the body of Christ-us!). This is a point that cannot be ignored. God is Omnipotent (all powerful). He does not need anyone nor anything to be God or help him. He has **chosen** to allow humanity to partner with Him in getting the salvific message of Christ to the nations. **Someone** said that God could have chosen to write the plan of salvation on the Sun so that is it rose each day, everyone would be able to see it and respond. He could have placed it on every leaf that as they fell to the ground everyone could read (in their own language) how to be a part of His family. Instead God has **chosen** to place mankind's hope and redemption in the hands of the church to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. One of the elders tells John to not weep! He instructs him to see the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:8-12), the Root of David...He is able to open the scroll and the seven seals! (Rev. 5:5). Notice then he saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. Jesus is both Lion and Lamb! He is the conqueror over Satan, but He is also the Lamb of God whose blood has redeemed us! The Lamb had seven horns (strength) and eyes (omniscience ...all knowing and wise) and those eyes are the seven spirits or sevenfold spirits of God. In verse seven Jesus goes and takes the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. The only one could approach the throne and take the scroll would be the one Who is worthy. The instant that this happened, (Rev. 5:8), the four living creatures and twenty four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and were holding a golden bowl full of incense. The beauty of the next part of verse 8 is priceless. The incense is he prayers of God's people. God takes the prayers of His people and they become a sweet smelling fragrance in His nostrils. After this they sang a new song, "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals because you were slain and with you blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priest to serve our God and they will reign on earth." Wow. What a loaded verse. It's a new song because prior to this point no one has ever been able to approach the throne and take the scroll. But now Jesus had done this and this "new song" erupts. But notice the contents: *You're worthy because you (Jesus) were slain and your blood has purchased (redeemed) people from every tribe, language and people and nation.* And this act has now made them to be priests and reign (with God) on the earth. Rev. 5:11 then John heard the voice of many angels, thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. (This is 100 million). This is just a portion of the angels. We will find in chapter seven all the angels of heaven making an appearance. What do we have to fear with such an army watching over us?!!! They cried, "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise! Then verse 13 states that every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them, saying: To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever! The four living creatures said "Amen" and the elders fell down and worshipped (remember Rev. 4:9&10 read). Jesus has finally taken the scroll and is beginning to close humanity's sinful chapter and issue in the new heaven and new earth. This chapter details this transition.

Things to ponder:

1. How has God chosen to involve humanity in His divine plan? What is Jesus' Role? What is the Holy Spirit's role?
2. When we see everything and everyone giving God the glory, how do you rate your "giving God the glory". How do you do that?
3. What do you think vs. 10 means when it says we are a kingdom and priests and we will reign on the earth?
4. The elders are closer to the throne than the angels. What do you think this represents (hint...God has made us a little lower than the angels..but.....)