

Title: **“WORTHY IS THE LAMB!”**

Text: Revelation 4:1-5:14

Subject: *Christ’s Glory*

Date: Sunday Morning — 2010

Tape # Z-86a

Reading: *Colossians 1:1-29*

Introduction:

SEVEN VISIONS

The Book of Revelation gives us seven visions of the Person and work of our great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, in this gospel age. In these seven visions the Lord revealed to John what he had done, is doing and shall hereafter do for his church, in his church and with his church.

The whole purpose of the Book is to assure God’s children in this world of their ultimate conquest over the world, the flesh and the devil. This blessed book is called **“The Revelation of Jesus Christ”** (1:1). By revealing to us who he is and what he does our Lord calls for us to ever look to him with confident faith, and assures us that we are **“More than conquerors through him that loved us.”** The seven visions John saw and recorded by Divine Inspiration are set before us in consecutive order in the twenty-two chapters of this Book. He saw...

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1. Christ **in the midst of his churches**, the seven golden candlesticks, in this world (chapters 1-3).
2. Christ **opening and fulfilling the seven sealed book** of God’s sovereign, eternal purpose (chapters 4-7).
3. Christ **answering the prayers of his people**, protecting them from their enemies, and vindicating them by executing the seven trumpets of judgment in his providential rule of the universe (chapters 8-11).
4. **Christ and his church persecuted** by Satan, world government, and false religion, the war between Christ and Satan (chapters 12-14).
5. Christ **sending his angels to pour out the seven vials** of his wrath upon the earth (chapters 15-16).
6. **Christ’s conquest** over Babylon (all false, freewill, works religion), the beast and the false prophet (chapters 17-19).
7. **Christ’s dominion over and destruction of Satan and the glory of the New Jerusalem** (chapters 20-22).

These seven visions each cover the whole gospel age from the first to the second coming of Christ. They do not represent different ages, dispensations, or prophetic events. **They all tell the same story.** They all tell us what our Lord has done, is doing and shall do for the salvation of his people.

The use of the word “seven” is striking. There are...

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- “Seven Golden Candlesticks,”
- “Seven Stars,”
- “Seven Seals,”
- “Seven Trumpets,”
- “Seven Angels,”
- “Seven Vials.”

Seven is the number of perfection, completion and satisfaction. And in each of these seven visions, the Holy Spirit assures us of the perfect rule of Christ as the Monarch of the universe for the complete victory and eternal salvation of his church. What a blessed assurance that is. Christ has prevailed! Christ is prevailing! Christ shall prevail!

When your soul is heavy, when your life is filled with chaos, when darkness blackens your sky, when everything in your life seems to be turning upside down, and confusion seizes your very soul, lift up your eyes unto the hills and hope in God our Savior, who closes his Book with “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ,*” “*the Lion of the Tribe of Judah*” who has prevailed to fulfil all the good will and purpose of God for your soul. — Behold the Lamb upon his throne, and rejoice. **Be easy, O my soul:** The Lamb of God who loved me and gave himself for me sits upon the throne of heaven! “*The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!*”

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With that as the background, I want you to open your Bibles to Revelation 4. We are going to look at chapters 4 and 5, and I am going to try to preach on the subject — **“WORTHY IS THE LAMB!”**

It is my prayer and my desire that God the Holy Spirit will enable me to lead you to the Throne of our great God and Savior and that he will allow us to worship him this hour. I have no other ambition, no other desire, but that we may worship him who loved us and gave himself for us. I cannot think of a passage of Holy Scripture more suited to inspire the worship of our Lord Jesus Christ than Revelation chapters 4 and 5. If the blessed Comforter and Revealer of Christ will show us what he showed John in these two chapters, seeing our Savior in his glory we will worship him. So hold your Bible open on your lap and follow with me, beginning at verse 1 of Revelation chapter 4, and we will enter in behind the veil into the holy of holies, where God our Savior fills everything with his glory.

REVELATION 4:1 — “After this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.”

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“AFTER THIS” — After the Lord’s Warnings to The Seven Churches (chapters 2-3)

- Ephesus — First Love
- Smyrna — *Be thou faithful unto death!*
- Pergamos — Balaam, Nicolaitans
- Thyatira — Jezebel, *The Depths of Satan* (Works Religion) — *That which you have already hold fast till I come! — Keep My Works!*
- Sardis — *You have a Name that you live, but you are dead! — Be Watchful! — Strengthen! — Remember!*
- Philadelphia — *Hold fast that which you have, so that no man takes your crown!*
- Laodecia — Lukewarmness, Indifference.

But watch this. — After all this, and after the counsel of verse 18, the call of verse 20 and the promise of verse 21.

(Revelation 3:18, 20, 21) “I counsel thee to buy of me gold (**The Gold of My Grace**) tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment (**Perfect Righteousness!**), that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve (**The Eyesalve of The Gospel**), that thou mayest see. — (21) “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my

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voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. (21) To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

Now, let’s look at these two magnificent chapters of Inspiration. — As we go through these two chapters, I will call your attention to five things.

1. The Door
2. The Throne
3. The People
4. The Book
5. The Lamb

THE DOOR

Verse 1 — “After this I looked, and, behold, **a door was opened in heaven**: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, **Come up hither**, and I will show thee things which **must be** hereafter.”

With wide-eyed wonder, John sees a door standing open in heaven. **He knew the significance of that door. He was about to see visions of God** (Ezekiel 1:1). While he is looking at the door in astonishment, he hears the voice of

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his dear Savior, like the voice of a trumpet speaking clearly to him, “*Come up hither.*” The Son of God called John up to heaven!

There is a way of access to God! There is a Door opened into the most holy place, by which sinners may approach and find acceptance with the most high God. That Way is Christ. That Door is Christ (John 10:9; 14:6; Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 10:19-20).

- We draw near to God by faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ.
- Salvation is ours when we come to God by faith in his dear Son (Hebrews 7:25).
- When the believer leaves this world, he is immediately with the Lord in heaven (2 Corinthians 5:1-9).
- And in the last day, we shall, in resurrection glory, enter into the presence of the Divine Majesty, there to abide forever (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

But the only Door by which sinful man can enter in is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He said to John, “**“Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.”** That is to say, “I will show you things that must be accomplished.” Those words do not imply that there is another dispensation of time yet to come. John himself tells us that this present gospel age, the time in which we are now living, is “*the last time*” (1

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John 2:18). The things here revealed “*must*” come to pass because they were appointed and decreed by God in his eternal purpose of grace in sovereign predestination.

THE THRONE

Verse 2 — And **immediately I was in the spirit;** and, behold, **a throne was set** in heaven, and **one sat on the throne.**

John's soul was drawn away from his earthly surroundings and carnal cares. His heart was fixed on God. He ceased to see with his physical eyes and hear with his physical ears. **He was “in the spirit.” With the eyes of his soul, he looked, “and behold, a throne.”** John's thoughts were focused on a throne. This throne is the theme of John's second vision. All of chapters four and five are taken up with and consumed by this throne and its Occupant. **The word “throne” is mentioned seventeen times in these two chapters.** Remember, this is a spiritual vision. The throne is a symbol of sovereign power, authority and dominion. — The Throne is the Throne of Grace, The Mercy-Seat!

The message of this chapter is as clear as the noonday sun: — All things are under the control of our God who sits upon the throne of universal dominion. This fourth

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chapter of Revelation does not merely give us a picture of heaven. It gives a picture of the entire universe from heaven's viewpoint. And **from heaven's viewpoint, the only matters of importance are the throne of God and the people of God.** In beautifully symbolic language, John shows us that all things are absolutely and totally governed by our God and Savior. In chapter 6, John will tell us about the many trials God's people must endure upon the earth. But first we are assured that God is in control — **“Behold, a throne!”** No trial will be unbearable to you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, if you can but realize with assurance that our God is on his throne.

What did John see when he entered by the Door? — The throne and the one who sits upon it (vv. 2, 3, 5, 6; Psalm 93:1-5; 97:1)

(Psalms 95:1-5) “O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. 3 For the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills *is* his also. 5 The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.”

(Psalms 97:1) “The LORD reigneth; let the earth

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rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad *thereof*.”

God's throne is set, fixed, and permanently established in heaven. — **“Behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne”** (v. 2). This throne is a symbol of power, dominion and judgment. It is set, permanently fixed in heaven. That means that God has ruled, is ruling and shall forever rule. His throne is immutably secure (Psalm 93:2). The power and dominion of God's throne reaches to all the ends of the earth. His dominion is everlasting and universal. It extends to all things (Daniel 4:34, 35, 37; Isaiah 45:7; 46:9-11).

The One who sits upon the throne is God. Tell me who is in control of the universe, and I will worship him, because the one who is in control of all things is God. Notice John's words: **“One sat on the throne.”** He sits in the perfect ease and serenity of total sovereignty, because he is God. He will never give up his right to rule. None can ever overthrow, or even temporarily impede his rule (Psalms 115:3; 135:6). **He “was to look upon like jasper and a sardine stone.”** John is not describing God himself, for God cannot be described by anything physical (Exodus 20:4). He is describing the majesty and glory which he saw radiating from the One who sat upon the throne. John does not give us an image of God. He does not use any human feature to describe the Almighty. He simply says that God

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is glorious to look upon. **According to Matthew Henry,** “**The jasper** is a transparent stone, which offers to the eye a variety of the most vivid colors, signifying the glorious perfections of God.” It is crystal clear (Revelation 21:11), representing the perfect holiness of God. **The sardine** stone is blood red, representing the justice of God. God will never give up his holiness, justice and truth. He is gloriously just in his government of the world, both in his saving grace and in his fearful judgments. God is just, both in pardoning sin and in punishing sin, both in the salvation of his elect and in the damnation of the unbelieving. He is “*a just God and a Savior*” (Isaiah 45:20-25).

Verse 3 — And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* **a rainbow** round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

What glorious comfort! Round about the throne of this august God, there is a rainbow. **The rainbow is a symbol to us that God, for Christ's sake, will remember his covenant and be merciful to his people.** He will never lift his omnipotent arm in anger against his covenant people, but only in mercy (Genesis 9:13; Psalm 89:28-34; Isaiah 54:7-10).

THE PEOPLE

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Verse 4 — “And round about the throne *were* **four and twenty seats**: and upon the seats I saw **four and twenty elders** sitting, **clothed in white raiment**; and they had on their heads **crowns of gold**.”

Around the throne of God, John saw twenty-four seats, smaller, subordinate thrones, and each of these seats were filled with the twenty-four elders sitting before God. They were all clothed with white garments, and they all wore crowns of pure gold on their heads. And round about the throne, between the throne of God and the twenty-four elders, John saw four beasts, or living creatures.

Who are these people? The twenty-four elders represent the whole church of God. As the twelve patriarchs represent the whole church of the Old Testament and the twelve apostles represent the whole church of the New Testament, these twenty-four elders represent all of God's elect, the whole church of God, the Israel of God (Revelation 21:12-14). **Several things need to be observed about these twenty-four elders.**

1. **Every seat around the throne is filled.** Not one of God's elect will be missing in that great day when Christ presents his redeemed ones in glory.

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2. **All of these redeemed ones seated around the throne are wearing the garments of salvation.** They are all clothed in the white raiment of Christ's righteousness.

3. **And everyone of these twenty-four elders were wearing crowns of victory.** The white garments represent our purity and priesthood in Christ. The crowns of pure gold represent our kingship, signifying that we are made kings as well as priests in Christ. **John Gill says of these twenty-four elders,** “They now reign as kings over sin, Satan and the world, and have a kingdom of grace which shall never be removed; and they shall reign with Christ...to all eternity in heaven.”

4. **These redeemed ones from every corner of the earth do but enhance the glory of God their Savior.** His throne represents his sovereignty. These twenty-four elders constantly render homage to him.

These crowns of gold are not crowns earned by us. They are crowns earned by our Savior and given to us by his grace.

- A Crown of Life is promised as the reward of faithfulness to the Lord (Revelation 2:10; James 1:12).
- A Crown of Righteousness is promised to all who love Christ at his appearing (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

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- A Crown of Rejoicing awaits those who seek God’s salvation in Christ (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).
- A Crown of Glory shall be the reward of our union with Christ (1 Peter 5:4).
- An Incorruptible Crown shall adorn the brows of all who are raised in incorruption (1 Corinthians 9:25).

These five crowns are one crown, and that one crown is the Lord Jesus Christ himself! It is written, “*In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people.*” **Christ is the Prize we seek. Christ is the Crown we shall wear. Christ is the Reward of his people.** What more could we need or desire? Christ is heaven. If we have Christ, we have all. We can want no more! He is our Glory. He is our Joy. He is our Righteousness. He is our Life. He is our Incorruptible Crown. In heaven’s eternal glory, “*Christ is all!*” And all who are seated with him in his glory wear him as their golden crown!

Verse 5 — “And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

Proceeding from the throne of the great God, we see the lightning bolts of Divine wrath, hear the thunderous

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terror of his holy law and hear the sweet, tender voices of mercy, love and grace in the gospel. The “*seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God,*” symbolize the eternal, wise, all-seeing Spirit of God. The number seven represents perfection. The Spirit of God, full of wisdom, light and holiness, constantly burns like fire to consume his enemies and to refine his people. — “*Our God is a consuming fire*” (Hebrews 12:29).

And John saw before the throne “**a sea of glass like unto crystal**” (v. 6). — In the tabernacle and temple of the Old Testament there was a brazen laver filled with water in which the priests were required to wash themselves when they came to minister before the Lord (Exodus 30:18; 38:8; 1 Kings 7:23). **Symbolically, this “sea of glass” represents the blood of Christ, which is a fountain opened in which we must be washed before we can approach the throne of God.**

(Revelation 4:6-8) “And before the throne *there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. 8 And the four beasts*

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had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

These four beasts, or living creatures, represent those men who preach the gospel of Christ to his church in all the successive ages of history. It is commonly assumed that these four living creatures are angelic, spirit beings. But that is a mistake. These four living creatures are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ (Revelation 5:8-11). The heavenly angels were not redeemed from sin, for they never sinned. These four living creatures represent all faithful gospel preachers throughout the ages. John tells us **ten things** about these living creatures as he saw them symbolically representing God's servants.

1. **There are four of them** (v. 6). God's servants are sent into the four corners of the earth to preach the gospel for the gathering of his elect out of every nation, kindred, tribe, and tongue.

2. **They are living creatures.** They have been made alive by the regenerating power and grace of the Holy Spirit, and go about their work of preaching the gospel with liveliness and fervency.

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3. **They stand between God and his people, not as priests, but as ambassadors.** They receive their message from God and deliver it to his people, leading them in the worship of God.

4. **These living creatures are full of eyes, before and behind.** They are gifted with spiritual insight into the mysteries of the gospel, possessing that God given knowledge and wisdom necessary to minister to the needs of immortal souls. They have **eyes before them** to look into the Word of God and discern its meaning. And they have **eyes behind them** to observe how that all the sacrifices, types, prophecies and promises of the Old Testament have their accomplishment in Christ.

5. The first beast had **the features of a lion** (v. 7). God's servants are not timid wimps. They are bold men.

6. The second living creature was **like a calf**. As the ox is an animal of labor, faithful gospel preachers labor diligently in the work of the ministry.

7. The third beast which John saw had **the face of a man**. God's servants are men like those to whom they preach. They are tenderhearted and sympathetic with their fellow creatures. Like the Lord Jesus himself, they are touched with the feelings and infirmities of God's saints in this world.

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8. The fourth living creature was **like a flying eagle**. As the eagle is both wise and swift, that man who is called of God to the work of preaching the gospel is given wisdom in the Word and wisdom with men, and he is given a heart of readiness to do the will of God in publishing the everlasting gospel (Romans 1:15-17).

9. Like the seraphim Isaiah saw (Isaiah 6:2), **each of these gospel messengers had six wings** (v. 8). With two, they might cover their faces in reverence before God. With two, they might cover their feet with humility, knowing themselves to be nothing else but sinners saved by grace. With two, they might swiftly fly to do the will of God.

10. **And these four heralds of the gospel are constantly engaged in their glorious work** (v. 8). — “*They were full of eyes within.*” They are ever looking within themselves, acknowledging their own sin and corruption by nature. And they have within themselves the testimony of the truth of God. That is to say, they preach to men only what they have proved to be true by experience. — “**And they rest not day and night.**” Faithful gospel preachers give themselves entirely to the work of the ministry. They are wholly and wholeheartedly given to the work of preaching the gospel, crying, “*Holy, holy,*

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holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

Gospel preachers, gifted with spiritual wisdom, grace and knowledge are God’s promise and God’s gift to his people (Jeremiah 3:15).

(Jeremiah 3:15) “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”

These living creatures, these preachers of the gospel, the angels of the churches, lead God’s saints in worship.

(Revelation 4:9-11) “And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

No sooner shall the Lord God place the crowns on our heads than we will willingly, gladly take them off our heads, bow before the feet of our God and Savior, and cast

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them down at the foot of the throne of his sovereign majesty and grace, saying, — “*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake*” (Psalm 115:1). Why? Because **Christ alone is worthy of honor, praise, and glory. He chose us. He redeemed us. He called us. He has preserved us. He shall bring us to glory.**

We will cast our crowns before his throne, because we will have a solemn reverence for him. We shall see him as he is, and we will say, “*That no flesh should glory in his presence.*” “*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*” We will cast our crowns before his throne, because we will be filled with a deep sense of sincere humility. Each will know then, far better than now, and each will gladly confess, “I am nothing. I have done nothing (Matthew 25:34-40). I deserve nothing.”

We will cast our crowns before his throne, because we will have a deep sense of gratitude to him. We will acknowledge then perfectly what we know now. — “*By the grace of God I am what I am.*” In short, we will cast our crowns before his throne, because we will love him intensely.

In mansions of glory and endless delight,
I’ll ever adore Thee in heaven so bright;

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I’ll sing, as I cast down the crown from my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, ‘tis now.

Read on, just as though there were no chapter break.

THE BOOK

Revelation 5

Verse 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.”

Verse 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?”

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

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

Verse 5 — “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, **the Lion** of the tribe of Juda, **the**

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Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”

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Verse 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.”

In chapter 4, John described the splendorous, incomparable glory of the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit in his sovereignty. In chapter 5, he describes the Mediator, the Lamb, whom he beheld in the midst of the throne, by whom the triune God makes himself known to men. And that Lamb is himself God, the Son.

Everything God has for men is in the Lamb, provided by the Lamb, revealed through the Lamb, and shall bring praise to the Lamb of God. All that God gives to sinners, he gives through Christ. And all that God receives from sinners, he receives through Christ. In chapter 4, John saw the sovereign majesty of the triune God in creation. Here he tells us about the sovereign majesty of the triune God in the redemption of sinners by Christ Jesus.

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Verse 7 — “And he came and **took the book** out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.”

This book is the book of God's eternal decrees. It represents God's eternal plan and purpose of grace, his purpose of predestination, which includes all things. It is to this book that our great Surety referred when he said, “*Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God*” (Psalm 40:7-8; Hebrews 10:5-10). **William Hendriksen said of this book,** “It symbolizes God's purpose with respect to the entire universe throughout history, and concerning all creatures in all ages and unto all eternity.”

Our God is a God of purpose, eternal, unalterable purpose (Isaiah 46:9-11). God's purpose of predestination includes all things (Ephesians 1:11). The object of God's eternal purpose of predestination is the salvation of his elect (Romans 8:28-30). Everything that comes to pass in time was purposed by God in eternity (Romans 11:36). **And the object of God in all that he does is the effectual accomplishment of the everlasting salvation of his elect.** In election, God chose a people whom he would save. In predestination, he sovereignly ordained all things that come to pass to secure the salvation of his chosen. And in providence, he accomplishes in time what he purposed from eternity.

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As John saw it, the book of God was closed, a mystery sealed with seven seals. These seven seals do not represent an imaginary ‘seven dispensations’ of time. The writing within and on the back and the seven seals simply mean that God's purpose is full, complete, perfect, and unalterable. Nothing can be added to it. Nothing can be taken from it. The seven seals also tell us that God's purpose of grace is unknown, unrevealed, a secret known only to God, until Christ revealed it. He revealed it at first in the types, shadows, and prophecies of the Old Testament. Then, in these last days, he has revealed it to us more fully in the gospel. And in the last day, when the restitution of all things is made, our Lord will perfectly reveal God's purpose in all things.

The closed book indicated that God's plan was both unrevealed and unexecuted. If the book should remain closed, God's eternal purpose would not be realized. His plan would not be executed. The thought of God's purpose being shut up, unrevealed, and unfulfilled, caused John great lamentation and grief. And he began to weep. If God's book is opened, if the seals are broken, then the universe is ruled and governed in the interest of God's elect, according to the purpose of his grace. Then God's glorious purpose of redemption would be accomplished. But if it is not opened and fulfilled, then the purpose of God himself

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would be thwarted. The grace of God would be frustrated. The plan of God would go unfulfilled. God himself would lose his glory. But there is no cause to weep! Christ has prevailed and opened the Book! Look at Revelation 10.

(Revelation 10:1-3) “And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: (2) And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his* left *foot* on the earth, (3) And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.”

“Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” — In other words, Christ has conquered all his enemies and ours (John 12:30-32). By the shedding of his blood, by his death upon the cross, this Lion of Judah, this Root of David, has prevailed. He has removed the sins of his people, satisfied the law, crushed the serpent's head and conquered death. By virtue of his sacrifice, Christ has earned the right to open the book and to rule the universe in accordance with God's eternal purpose of grace (Revelation 10:1-3). God has given him power over all flesh that he might give eternal life to his elect (John 17:2).

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John beheld the Lord Jesus Christ, not only as a conquering Lion, but also as a sin atoning, mediating Lamb. He saw the Lamb in the midst of the four beasts and the twenty-four elders as a Lamb that had been slaughtered. That means that the virtue and merit of his sacrifice is abiding, perpetual, and efficacious (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2). This Lamb, symbolically, has “**seven horns.**” Horns are emblems of power. Christ is the horn of salvation. As such, he has plenty of power. He is able to save his people (Hebrews 7:25), keep them in his grace (John 10:27-29), and to do for them all that they need. He also has “**seven eyes,**” abundant wisdom. These seven eyes represent the gifts, power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit which are dispensed to God's elect upon the earth by virtue of Christ's death, resurrection and exaltation as our Substitute (Psalm 68:18-20).

Then, as John looked on, Christ the Lamb took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne (v. 7). **John Trapp said,** “As a Mediator he took it, as God he gave it.” Our Savior did not ask for the book. He took it, because it is his right to do so.

This is the significance of what John saw. The Lord Jesus Christ, our Mediator, received authority to rule the universe according to the will of God by virtue of his sin-atoning

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sacrifice (John 17:2). This is a picture of the coronation of King Jesus (Hebrews 2:8-9). As the Father's reward to him for his mediatorial accomplishments at his ascension, Christ Jesus received for himself a kingdom (Luke 19:12; Philippians 2:6-11; Psalms 2; 110; Daniel 7:9-14). The Triune Jehovah has turned the world over to the rule of the God-man, the Lamb, our Mediator! **God governs the universe, according to his own eternal decrees, through the Lamb. This is Christ's reward and every believer's comfort.**

Verse 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.**”

(Matthew 6:9-13) “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. (10) Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. (11) Give us this day our daily bread. (12) And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

Verse 9 — And they sung a new song, saying, Thou

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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;

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

Verse 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;

- All the Chosen Angels
- All the Elect of God
- All the Redeemed
- All the Called
- All the Saints
- All Who Believe

Verse 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.

As soon as the Lamb took the book in his hands, and accepted the scepter of universal monarchy, a song of

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praise broke out in heaven. This song began with the church, the redeemed ones, and was taken up by the heavenly angels. This song is a celebration of Christ's worthiness to rule the universe according to God's purpose (Revelation 10:1-3), and to receive all praise, honor, and glory forever. The basis of both his worthiness of such honor and the praise given to him by saints and angels is his effectual redemption. Praise is not given to him simply because he was slain, (Many have been slain!), but because his slaughter was the accomplishment of our redemption. The death of Christ, as the sin-atonement Lamb, was the accomplishment of a particular and effectual redemption. The song does not say, ‘Thou hast redeemed every kindred, tongue, people, and nation.’ That would mean either that his blood was shed in vain for the multitudes who are lost, or that all the universe is saved. Neither of which is true. This song says, **“Thou hast redeemed us OUT OF every kindred, tongue, people, and nation!”** — But God’s elect are not the only ones who praise him. Read on...

Verse 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.

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Verse 14 — And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever (Ephesians 1:9-10; Acts 3:21; Philippians 2:9-11; Isaiah 45:20-25).

It is God's ultimate purpose that everything and everyone in his creation bow before and bring honor to his dear Son in the salvation of his people. And God will see to it that his purpose is accomplished in the end (Psalm 76:10; Isaiah 45:20-25; Colossians 1:18). He who made all things, sustains all things, and rules all things shall have the eternal praise of all things. — *“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!...For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen”* (Romans 11:33, 36).

(Acts 3:21) Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

(Ephesians 1:9-10) Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: (10) That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather

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together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

(Philippians 2:9-11) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; (11) And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

(Isaiah 45:20-25) “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me. (22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for *I am* God, and *there is* none else. (23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are

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incensed against him shall be ashamed. (25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

Illustration: *I heard a great choir singing!*

Amen.