

The Book of Revelation – Chapters 4 and 5

Introduction:

1. No book in Scripture reveals the glory of God and Christ than this book and yet no book has been more misunderstood and misinterpreted and neglected
2. **Revelation 22:10** *"Do not seal up not the words of the prophecy of this book for the time is at hand."*
3. It is the only book that begins and ends with a blessing
4. We have in previous weeks established that the theme in the **first eight verses of chapter 1** is Jesus Christ and His Second Coming.
5. **Chapter 2 and 3** as we saw that he addresses the churches. **Chapter 3** ends the messages to the churches.
6. After **chapter 3** we do not hear the word "church" again in until the very end of **chapter 22** when the writer simply says, **"Go back and remember what I said to the church."**
7. All the messages to the churches ended the same way... **"He that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."** So, what does that mean – it means that the message to those churches goes beyond them to everybody who has got spiritual ears

Chapter 4:

1. As with many other Bible prophecies, Christians disagree over what will happen in the end times. Different theories exist for the tribulation, rapture, and second coming.
2. Regardless of which version comes to pass, Jesus himself said two things are certain.
 - First, Jesus will appear
 - Second - Second, Jesus emphasized that no one, can foretell precisely when these events will happen - **But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. (Matthew 24:36)**
3. Churches today often neglect the study and preaching of biblical prophecy because they consider it a controversial and impractical topic.
5. No single Bible verse says precisely when the Rapture will take place in relation to the Tribulation or the Second Coming in a way that would settle the issue to everyone's satisfaction.
6. **Revelation 4:1-2** *"After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." ² At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne"*
7. With this open door and called to ascend, this vision is reminiscent of the dream of Jacob. **Genesis 28:12** *"Behold a ladder or stairway shut up and reaching up to the earth. And it hid. Reach to the sky, and behold, the angels of God would be ascending and descending on it"*
8. John's gospel does a good job in remaining anonymous. It may have been John, son of Zebedee who authored it. A major arguments against the Gospel of John and Revelation being written by the same person is that the Greek of John's gospel and that of Revelation is dramatically different - he Greek of John's gospel is clearly better than the Greek of Revelation.
9. **Revelation 4:3** *"And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne"*
10. **Ezekiel 1: 26-27** *"And above the expanse over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire;^[a] and seated above the likeness of a throne was a*

likeness with a human appearance. And upward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. And downward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness around him"

11. *Revelation 4: 4. "Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads"*

12. *Revelation 11:15-19* the 24 elders seemed to function as God's chief worshippers with the power of mediating priests.

13. *Revelation 4:5-6 "From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.*

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind"

14. *Revelation 4:4-8 "And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: ⁷ the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. ⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"*

15. The living beings of *Ezekiel 1-11* are identified with the six-winged creatures of *Isaiah 6*.

16. *Isaiah 6:2-3 "Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory"*

17. *Ezekiel 1:22-23 "Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of an expanse, shining like awe-inspiring crystal, spread out above their heads. And under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another. And each creature had two wings covering its body"*

18. Both in *Ezekiel* and in *Revelation 4* the four living beings are situated under the travelling throne Chariot of God, forming a square as it were, through the wings and all touch each other's wings and the wheels, and always move together with the living beings

19. Their eyes do not look in one direction alone, but in all possible directions.

20. *Revelation 4:9-11 "And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."*

21. John was allowed to witness not only the structure the heavenly of God, but also the actual liturgy - the order of worship that takes place in the heaven. Wherever God is worshipped.

Chapter 5:

1. *Revelation 5:1 "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. The scroll in this vision is written on both sides - this is common in the ancient world as writing materials were very expensive.

3. This scroll was secured by 7 seals which would safeguard what was written inside.
4. The seals were not designed to conceal the content but to protect it from any alterations.
5. ***Daniel 7:13-14 "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him"***
6. Then the idea of a book of Heavenly Records has deep rooted Hebrew and Jewish scriptural tradition. ***Psalms 139:16 says "your eyes have seen my unformed substance, and in your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them" Exodus 32:32, where we read "but now, if you will forgive their sin and if not please blot me out from your book which you have written"***
7. ***Revelation 3:5 "He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments, and I will not erase his name from the Book of Life, and I'll confess his name before my father and before his angels."***
8. Unlike many surrounding nations, Jewish culture is a very literate culture, and images of books, scrolls, records of all sorts, writing and reading was common
9. ***Revelation 5: 2-3 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it"***
10. No one was found.
11. ***Revelation 5:4 "and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it."***
12. In the context of the vision, the very fate of the entire universe apparently hinges on finding someone who is worthy to unseal the scroll.
13. ***Revelation 5:5a "And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David"***
14. He should look to someone who is escaped his attention who combines the qualities that are worthy of the royal epithet - ***The Lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David***
15. The descendant from both Judah and David were necessary qualifications of the Messiah.
16. Both the Genesis and Isaiah show the picture of Christ Jesus - the descendant of both of Judah and David, who is fully qualified to rule Israel and the nations because he has shown himself to be victorious and prevail over all the enemies, both his own and God.
17. ***Revelation 5, verse 5b "has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."***
18. ***Revelation 5:6 "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"***
19. The Greek phrase between the throne in this verse should more accurately be translated as "in the midst of the throne" or even "in the center of the throne"
20. ***Revelation 5:7-8 And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne. 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"***
21. Keeping with the Gospel of John the Book of Revelation sets forth what some scholars call high Christology, showing Jesus as God, and not as half God or somewhat God.

22. As you move through the verses note how the number of praising and worshipping individuals grows exponentially.

23. ***Revelation 5:9-10 “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, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”***

24. In Revelation, Jesus is praised for the very act, purchasing the people with his own blood. The redemption that Jesus brings applies to every tribe, tongue, people, and every nation.

25. The framework of the Book of Revelation is thoroughly Jewish, here we witness a theological move from tribal to universal perspective

26. ***“God is not God of the Jews only but he's also the God of the nations” Romans 3:29***

27. ***Isaiah 66:18-21 “and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, And they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the Lord”***

28. ***Revelation 5 verse 12b “worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”***

29. ***Revelation 5:13b “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!”***

Amen:

1. ***Revelation 5:14. “And the four living creatures kept saying Amen, and the elders fell down and worshipped”***

2. As the song and the words sounded, the four living creatures continuously repeated the word that in the Jewish psyche related to verifiable truth, absolute agreement, and full complete faith in this statement confirmed by it

3. Revelation thus literally identifies the Lion Lamb, Messiah with ultimate truth and stability.

4. He is described as the “faithful witness” and “the beginning of creation” upon whom resist the existence and fate of the entire universe.

5. And to that we say Amen and Amen