

Rev 5:1-14 - A Worthy Savior to Praise

Pastor Chris Bove

Introduction - Jesus is worthy to be praised because He has ransomed us as the slain Lamb of God. We should adore Jesus because He rescued us and should have confidence His judgement will be just.

v1-4 - Is there anyone worthy to open the scroll? - An ancient scroll was rolled up, tied with string, and wax sealed the knot, so there were seven strings/knots/seals that had to be undone to open the scroll.¹ A Roman will was sealed with seven seals and only the heir could open it.² The scroll's identity is not revealed, though it could be the title deed to the earth (Jer 32:6-15), the will of God for the kingdom and close of earthly history (Ps 2; Heb 1:2), or a book of judgements.³ Written inside and out, there is no room for anything to be added.² In all the universe and heavens, no one is worthy to open it (Acts 4:12; Rom 3:9-20, 23-26), which causes John exceeding grief.

v5-7 - The Lamb is worthy to take the scroll! - The elder announces a Lion (Gen 49:8-12, Num 24:9, 14-19, Deut 33:20-22), yet, behold, a Lamb! The Shoot/Root of David (Is 11:1; 10) has conquered (Jhn 16:33; Rev 3:21; 1Jo 5:1-5; Is 53:9; 1Co 15:54-57; Heb 12:2). "Lamb" is the diminutive form: a little lamb, expressing Christ's meekness. The Lamb looks like it has been slaughtered (Jhn 1:29-36; Rev 13:8). Jesus died for the sins of the world (Heb 2:17; 9:28; 10:4, 12; Acts 2:38; 1Co 15:3; Gal 1:4; 1Pe 2:24; 3:18; 1Jo 2:2). Seven horns: complete power and authority (omnipotence). Seven eyes/spirits: the sevenfold Holy Spirit (Jo 16:7; Rom 8:9) and omniscience. The scene reflects Dan 7:13-14.

v8-12 - Praise to the Lamb! - The elders hold harps (Rev 14:2-3; Ps 33:2; 43:4; 150) and bowls of incense, symbolizing the prayers of the saints (Ps 141:2; 1Ti 2:5; Rev 6:9-11; 8:3-5). "God has given us prayer as a wartime walkie-talkie so that we can call headquarters for everything we need as the kingdom of Christ advances in the world. Prayer gives us the significance of frontline forces and gives God the glory of a limitless Provider. The one who gives the power gets the glory."⁴ They sing a "new" song in light of salvation, declaring Jesus as worthy. Roman Emperors arriving into a city were greeted with, "You are worthy!"¹ Jesus was slain (1Jo 3:16; Eph 5:25; Jhn 10:15) and by His blood, ransomed us for God, making atonement for our sins (Is 53:5ff; Dan 9:24-26; Rom 3:25; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:17; 5:2; 1Ti 2:6; 1Pe 1:18-19). He did this to make them God's people (Tit 2:14; 1Pe 2:24; 3:18; Heb 9:28). All the nations (ethne), all the different people groups are included in God's redeeming love with no partiality (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11; Rom 10:12-15; Eph 2:13-22; Rom 2:11; Acts 10:34). They have been made priests to God (1Pe 2:9-10; Ex 28:36). They declare Jesus is worthy of seven things (Rev 7:12) which He, in some ways, surrendered on earth (2Co 8:9; 13:4; 1Co 1:18; Heb 12:2). Jesus deserved this worship forever, but He gave it up, came to the world to be scorned, and now He finally receives the glory He is due.

v13-14 - Praise to the Father and Son! - All creation worships the Father and Jesus (Ps 145:21; 149; 150:6; Phl 2:5-11).

So, what? Now, what? One day, we'll sing "amen" before the throne with all of creation. Until then, following the model of Jesus, we pursue lives of holiness and godliness, laying down our lives in hope for future glory (2Pe 3:11-18).

- Is God my exceeding joy? How can making melody in my heart help me? (Eph 5:19)
- Do I make use of the privilege of prayer?
- How is God calling me to lay down my life today? What does He want for His kingdom?
- How can I help further the mission of Christ to every people group? We start with prayer.
- Why is the priesthood of all believers an important doctrine? What is the implication?
- If you believe that Jesus Christ has paid for your sins, do you live as a priest and a citizen of heaven?

¹ David Guzik. *Study Guide for Revelation*. Blue Letter Bible.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines: New Testament*. 809.

³ John F. Walvoord. *Revelation: The John Walvoord Prophecy Commentaries*. 109-113.

⁴ John Piper. *Let the Nations Be Glad!* 47.

A note on Verse 10

Verse 10 reads differently in KJV, which was translated from different manuscripts. In KJV, the elders say, “you have made *us* a kingdom” while modern translations say “have made *them*.” Thus the KJV necessitates that they are the redeemed people of God. Whichever it is, the description of the elders supports the conclusion they are not angels but redeemed mankind. MacArthur views “them” as the elders “moving beyond themselves to sweep up all the saints of all the ages into praise and adoration.”³