

Worthy is the Lamb

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[3 : 4 0] Revelation chapter 5.

Revelation chapter 5. Revelation chapter 5. One of the kings of sort of the groups of creation. And they are crying out, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.

And as you read it, it makes you want to enter into it. It makes you want to be there. To be worshipping.

To be able to have a crown and to throw it before God's feet. We want to participate for this awesome, holy worship to fill the earth.

And reading chapter 4, it makes desire come alive in our own hearts. This is what we want.

[5 : 3 2] We want to be there. We want to experience that. We want to see that. That this could be on the earth. That I could be there. That I could be falling down. That I could be casting my crowns and my crown before him.

Well, as chapter 5 begins, John sees in the right hand of him who sits on the throne a scroll. And it's writing on both sides. And it's sealed with seven seals.

And what is that? Well, it's the prophetic plan of God. We heard about this morning. God has this plan. And here we get to see sort of a physical manifestation of it.

This is the prophetic plan of God for this world. And it really is the answer to that desire that I was just talking about. We want that scene to be here.

We want to participate in that. We want to be like priests and kings before our God. Like these angelic elders. Like these four living creatures. They have crowns.

[6 : 3 6] They're singing. They're worshipping. And this scroll. This scroll is the answer. This scroll is the plan.

But more than that, as you read through Revelation, it's not just a plan. God's plans aren't like our plans. We can write our to-do list. But that doesn't mean that that actually is going to happen.

But when God has a plan and he writes it down, it carries with it the very power of God to accomplish it. And that's what you see throughout Revelation. When it is broken open, this scroll begins to unfold history and to bring about God's plan.

It has God's power with it. God's power to crush his enemies, to build his kingdom, is released on the earth. And so this scroll is God's plan to bring that heavenly scene down to earth, to bring us up into it, to make us kings and priests.

And that's why when no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth is able to open it, John isn't just like, oh, I wanted to see what that was all about.

[7 : 51] You see what he does. He weeps and weeps. I wept and wept for no one was found worthy. It's like John's hopes and dreams and our hopes and our desires are completely dashed, crushed.

But then you remember one of the elders says, do not weep. See the lion of the tribe of Judah. The root of David has triumphed. And John looks.

And from that description, I think there's no doubt that John looks up and he's expecting to see a king, a mighty king, a roaring, tearing lion, a Davidic king with a sword in his hand, ready to destroy his enemies.

A ferocious lion with blood. Have you seen these pictures of lions after they fed that blood on their mains, on their throats, on their chest?

That's that's probably what John is expecting to see. But then it says. Then I saw a lamb. Looking as if it had been slain.

[9 : 02] When a lamb was slain. At first, its throat was slit. And so there was blood.

There's blood dripping down. And this lamb has blood on him. Blood all around his throat. But it's not blood. The blood of his enemies dripping from his jaws.

It's his own blood. On his own neck. And this lamb comes right to the throne. And he takes the scroll.

The power and plan of God. To unite heaven and earth. To bring us up into that heavenly worship.

To make us kings and priests to serve his God. He takes that plan and he is going to carry it out. He is worthy to sit on the throne. He is worthy to make this happen.

[10 : 03] And when he takes the scroll, the 24 angelic elders fall down. And their harps, with their harps and our prayers, they sing a new song.

You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals. You're unworthy. Or you are worthy to unleash the plan of God. And we see in their song, we see three reasons why he is worthy.

Why is Jesus Christ the one that can be in charge? Why is he the one that has the power and the worthiness to unite heaven and earth?

Well, three reasons. The first is, you see it, you are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals because you were slain.

You were slain. And that's what we're remembering tonight. The lamb was slain. Well, who died?

[11 : 06] Who was he? Well, he's the lamb of God. He's the son of God. He's the prince and ruler of heaven. Angels are the servants in the house.

Hebrews says he's the son over the house. And all of his heavenly servants can't get over the fact that he is the one that is slain.

You were slain. You were slain. And you didn't win through force of arms. He won through death.

Through defeat. So the Lord of life, through whom all things were created that have been created. He's the one that is slain.

And they can't get over it because they know his place. They know his power. They know where he belongs. They know the honor and the glory and the worship that he is due.

[12 : 08] He's the king. They're the servants. And they can't get over the fact that you were slain. So angels bow in their hearts and they say, we're his.

We're his servants. But he was slain. Pastor John read it. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And like a sheep before her shearers is silent. So he did not open his mouth.

His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man in his form marred beyond human likeness. He was cut off.

It's a violent word. Cut off from the land of the living. For the transgression of my people, he was stricken. And that's why he's worthy.

That's why Isaiah 52 in that servant song begins with, this is why he's going to be highly exalted and raised up. Because this is what he did.

[13 : 09] And so there's nothing less than high exaltation that's his due. So that's first. He was slain. But now secondly, why is he worthy to sit on the throne and to bring heaven and earth together?

Because with your blood, you purchased men for God. You purchased men for God. And this is where I want to draw us in.

Brothers and sisters, this is where we're drawn into this story. We've been thinking a lot about our identity as servants of God. And that's what we are, his servants.

And how did we become his servants? The song tells us. He bought us. He bought us for God.

Why did Jesus come into the world? Why was he born in Bethlehem? Well, the song tells us he came as a purchasing agent.

[14 : 08] He came on behalf of someone else to buy something. And so he came as this heavenly trader to a dark country.

And he's here to buy goods, to buy men for God. And so he sails across all the dark waters between heaven and earth. And down, down, down he comes.

And he leaves the land of light. He leaves his father's home, his father's mansion, his father's castle in the sky. And as a purchasing agent, as a trader, he comes looking for goods to buy.

You know who Marco Polo is, or at least you know something about him. He traveled all the way from medieval Italy all the way to China. He was a trader.

He wasn't just an explorer. But long before Marco Polo ever went to faraway China, there were others that went. There were others who went looking, who took the water and the road to China and to Southeast Asia.

[15 : 20] They were looking for silks. They were looking for spices. And those things were so valuable, it was worth traveling that far. Now, this blows my mind, but we know that there were Roman citizens living in ancient China, doing business.

And they found coins and Roman pottery all the way in China, down in Vietnam. And what are those things doing there?

How did they get there? Well, men were coming to China, to Vietnam, to those islands, looking for silk and spices. They were purchasing agents. They were sent there on behalf of some Roman wealthy trader or trading syndicates.

And they go into this far country, far, far country where things are so different. And they're there buying and selling, purchasing for their sponsors.

But no trader, no businessman, no merchant went so far as the Son of God. And he didn't come into the market looking for silk and spices.

[16 : 40] He's looking for men for God. Servants of God. For God. It says God wanted men, men and women to serve him.

God wanted particular men, this song tells us. He bought them from every tribe and language and people and nation.

He bought them from, out of. So there's the selection. He bought some out of all of these tribes and languages. Not all indiscriminately. He's not like those people that go to the storage sheds and says, I'll just buy what's in there.

I don't know what's in there. No, he comes individually. He has a shopping list. And glory to God, I'm on that list. He loved me and he gave himself up to buy me.

And so he bought me with his own blood. He loved me and he gave himself up for me. He made me a servant. And so he bought me out of that dark country. And he bound me over to heaven and to his own home.

[17 : 51] But it's not just me. He bought me all kinds of particular people, different tribes and different languages, peoples, nations, cultures. Jesus was shopping in every section of the grocery store.

Off of every shelf, he was buying something. Buying men for God. Beloved, he found us. He found us.

He paid for us. That was the price for our freedom. His blood. We were bound in sin.

Slaves to sin. With another master. Guilty before God. And he bought us. He redeemed us. With his blood.

So that's the price of our freedom. It's also the price for our service. And that's what the angels can't get over. He was slain to buy them.

[18 : 52] They're thrilled with that grace. Well, why is he worthy? Why is he worthy to take that scroll? To sit on the throne.

To unleash the power and the plan of God. To bring this about. Well, third, it's because his death is the driving power of what the scroll is all about.

Remember the scroll. It's about how we can enter into that worship. How we can become like those angelic kings and priests. How can we enter into that worship?

I think it's clear that these angelic elders are priest kings.

They have thrones. They have crowns. They reign. But they're also priests because night and day they're singing before God. They're worshipping God.

[19 : 55] And so how can we be like them? Well, that's what the song tells us. Jesus' death did that. You were slain and with your blood you purchased men for God.

And you have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God. And they will reign on the earth. So Jesus came to buy men for God.

And to buy servants for God. And what kind of service does he give us to do? What's our office? Well, we'll serve as kings and priests under him.

And in part, we've already entered into those. He's the king of kings. And we will. A great deal of this is looking to the future of what will happen.

But we will. But we already have in part our ruling. So he's the king. And we're meant to be the kings under him to do his will.

[21 : 09] So he brought us to rule for him. He brought you to rule for him. In your families. At your work. At whatever sphere he has given you.

To rule for him. To be a king in his kingdom. To have authority. To serve him. But more than that, he's this great high priest. And he makes us to be priests with him.

And so we will worship him day and night as priests before him. That's what kind of service he has given us. That's what kind of service he came to buy. That's what he's making of us.

What a privilege. One of the sons of Korah, the psalmist said, I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than live in the tents of the wicked. He's saying it would be better just to have a menial job in the temple.

But beloved, Jesus purchased servants to be priests. To live in that temple. To live forever in that temple. To stand before him and offer him praise day and night.

[22 : 18] The throne of God and the lamb will be in the city. And his servants will serve him. They will see his face.

That's the greatest kind of service you could have. To be right there in front of him. Worshiping him.

Offering him your praise. Not as mere doorkeepers. Jesus didn't buy mere doorkeepers. Any of his children. Any of his people.

But as priests and kings. And so tonight. Tonight is a lot of things. But in part.

What we're doing is we're taking out that purchase agreement. And we're looking at it again. We're reminding ourselves of what Jesus did. He was slain.

[23 : 16] And with his blood. He purchased men for God. He purchased me. I'm not my own. I've been bought. With a great price. He purchased me for God.

To be God's servant. To be a priest. And a king to serve him. And so tonight we should. And we do. Renew our commitment. To serve him. My service.

Is bought. And paid for. I am not my own. He gave himself for me. And so now again.

I give myself to him. To serve him. We're doing a lot of things.

But that's in part what we are doing. We're reminding ourselves of what he did for us. And now what we are because of that. So at the cross.

[24 : 14] And in the table. Jesus is saying. I'm yours. Body and soul. I'm yours. I'm. I give myself to you. And so we in reply.

Should say. And we do say. What little Samuel said. Speak Lord. Your servant. Is listening. And so.

After. We. Remember the Lord's death. Those words should be. Echoing in our minds. Speak Lord. Your servant. Is listening. What do you want me to do?

I'm paid for. So speak Lord. Your servant. Is listening. To be continued.