

Link to Lonnie Woodruff's *Revelation for Christians Today*, online:
<http://www.abiblecommentary.com/howtounderstandthebookofrevelation.htm>

A Study of Revelation 5

I. Outline.

1. The Problem Expounded (Revelation 5.1-4).
 2. The Person Exalted (5-7)
 3. The Praises expressed (8-14)
- Adapted from Merrill C. Tenney

II. Summary.

There is a close connection between chapters 4 and 5. In chapter 4 there is praise for God the Creator and here in chapter 5 there is praise for the Lamb, Jesus Christ, Who is worthy. The “book” or scroll seen in the hand of the One Who sat upon the throne is sealed with seven seals. How will it be opened? John weeps (bitterly, cf., Luke 19:41) that it has been declared that none is worthy to open the sealed document. However, thankfully, there was One Who was worthy to open the seals—The Lamb Who had been slain. When the Lamb took the book, the 28 began to worship Him, singing a new song. Following this a great innumerable multitude began to join in the praise of the Lamb.

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

- **Chapter 5**... “While the persecutions of the saints of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd centuries were unquestionably far more intense and severe than anything most of us have ever experienced, still we too need to know that God reigns supreme and through the Lamb’s blood we are redeemed and in the Lion’s strength we can confidently expect to triumph” [Maxie Boren, “Worthy is the Lamb,” in *The Book of Revelation*, edited by Jim Laws, 23rd Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship, pp., 261-62]. |||| “Chapters 4 and 5 go together; chapter 4 centers on worship to God as Creator, while chapter 5 features worship to Christ as Redeemer” [David Roper, *Revelation 1-11*, Truth for Today Commentary, p. 225]
- 5:1... **...A BOOK WRITTEN WITHIN AND ON THE BACKSIDE, SEALED WITH SEVEN SEALS**—“Exodus 32:15-16 describes the two stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were engraved as ‘inscribed on both sides, front and back.’ These tablets are ‘the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.’ If John intends for us to think of this passage, then he wants us to view the writing on both sides of the scroll as put there by God” [College Press New Testament].
 |||| “A seal served three purposes: It verified ownership, assured genuineness, and protected the contents (see comments on 7:4). The seal protected the contents of a manuscript, even as a seal protects the contents of a medicine bottle: If the seal is broken, we are wary of the contents. The fact that this scroll had seven seals indicated that it was COMPLETELY sealed. No one could know what was inside without breaking the seals” [Roper, p. 227].
- 5:4... **AND I WEPT MUCH, BECAUSE NO MAN WAS FOUND WORTHY TO OPEN AND TO READ THE BOOK**--“The exiled apostle is filled with anxiety to penetrate the secrets of futurity, and to know the fortunes of that Church which he loved better than he loved his own life. He was then a prisoner on a rocky isle of the sea. It was a time of persecution. He was separated from the saints, and ardently desires to know the results, in the future, of all the struggles, sufferings and blood of a persecuted people” [B.W. Johnson]. |||| “The book-roll is sealed against inspection; it is not offered to John to

read. The contents will be learned [as] the seals are successively disclosed in the following chapters” [Quoting Charles H. Roberson, Maxie Boren, pp., 264-65]. |||| “Obviously this is a dramatic touch, since God knew who would be able to open the book and reveal that which was to come. He did not have to search through the universe to find Christ. The answer that follows lets us know this. Yet the incident **emphasizes the dramatic quality of this book**” [Frank Pack, *Revelation, Part I*, p. 56, emphasis mine, DRL].

- 5:5... **...THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, THE ROOT OF DAVID, HATH PREVAILED TO OPEN THE BOOK**—“But how could this be? Judah in person had been a rascal. He had wanted to kill Joseph, and did have a part in selling him. Judah committed adultery with his own daughter-in-law. But, thank God, he lived long enough to overcome selfish indulgence. His disposition so changed from selfishness that he was willing to become a bondman forever to keep tears off his old father’s face. Judah truly became a prince (1 Chronicles 5:2), prevailing above his brothers (cf., Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14). His character had become unimpeachable, and as unconquerable as a lion. Now he was worthy to be a progenitor of lion-like David, and he in turn to be the ancestor of Jesus, the root of David. Great promises (2 Samuel 7:16; Luke 1:32-33) made to David were fulfilled in Jesus, the lion of Judah. This mighty descendant, in the world’s most crucial struggle, overcame the devil, entering into the house of the strong man, and binding him (Matthew 12:29). In this way he brought to naught him who had the power of death, that is, the devil (Hebrews 2:14). Jesus as a conquering lion destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). The king of beasts, the type of the mighty Christ, had prevailed. thanks be to God who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57). he now has the keys of death and of Hades (Revelation 1:18). he has led captivity captive, and has distributed gifts to men (Ephesians 4:8)” [Hugo McCord, *The Royal Route of Revelation*, p. 32]. |||| HATH PREVAILED in the KJV is OVERCOME in the ASV—“‘Overcome’ is the word used again and again in the letters to the seven churches; it is the verb form of the Greek word for ‘victory,’ (nike). Since this One had been victorious, He was qualified to open the book” [David Roper, p. 230].
- 5:6... **...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**—“He has the marks of sacrificial death still on himself, but he is not dead; he is standing and alive. He also has power (i.e., seven horns) and knowledge (i.e., seven eyes) which work for the benefit of those who trust and follow him. Because of who he is and what he has done, he is the one and only person who is worthy (in holiness and authority) to open and reveal the contents of the book of the destiny of mankind” [Rubel Shelly, *The Lamb and His Enemies*, p. 48]. Cf., Deuteronomy 33:17.
- 5:8... **...GOLDEN VIALS FULL OF ODOURS...**—“The comforting thought is that these prayers are not lost, but are presented at the throne of God and before the Lamb” [B.W. Johnson].
- 5:10... **AND HAST MADE US UNTO OUR GOD KINGS AND PRIESTS: AND WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH**—“No reference is made here to a political sovereignty, nor to a millennial reign on earth, but rather to a spiritual ruling that they share with Jesus Christ” [Pack, p. 60]. |||| “As Christians, we reign in several ways: (1) We are the kingdom of Christ (Revelation 1:6), which is the church (Matthew 16:18-19). (2) Since God is our Father (1 Corinthians 1:3), we are part of the Royal Family. (3) Since Christ is presently reigning (Acts 2:33-36; 1 Corinthians 15:25) and we are ‘in Christ’ (2 Corinthians 5:17), we share in His reign. (4) Since we have been saved, no longer does death reign over us; rather, we have been given the strength to ‘reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17; see Romans 5:14, 21)” [Roper, pp., 235-36].
- 5:12... **...WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING**—“In keeping with the frequent use of the number seven (i.e., perfection) in apocalyptic literature, the Lamb is praised by means of seven expressions” [Shelly, p. 48].

V. Lessons & Applications.

- **This chapter PRAISES our great Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.** Thankfully, He IS worthy to open the book and loose the seven seals. Jesus is presented here as the Lamb of God Who is Worthy to Be Praised. *Actually, Jesus is the HEART of the entire New Testament:* In **Matthew** He is the King of the Jews (Mt 2:2); In **Mark** He is the servant of God (Mark 10:44-45); In **Luke** He is the perfect Son of Man (Luke 9:56); In **John** He is the exalted Son of God (John 20:30-31); In **Acts** He is the ascended Lord (Acts 1:9-11); In **Romans** He our righteousness (Rom 3:21-25); In **1 Corinthians** He is the firstfruits from the dead (1 Cor 15:20); In **2 Corinthians** He is the One made sin for us (2 Cor 5:21); In **Galatians** He is the One who set us free (Gal 2:20-21); In **Ephesians** He is the One who blesses (Eph 1:3); In **Philippians** He is the joy bringer (Phil 3:1,3; 4:4); In **Colossians** He is the pre-eminent One (Col 1:18); In **1 Thessalonians** He is the returning Lord (1 Thes 4:13-18); In **2 Thessalonians** He is the world's judge (2 Thes 1:7-9); In **1 Timothy** He is our mediator (1 Tim 2:5); In **2 Timothy** He is the bestower of crowns (2 Tim 4:8); In **Titus** He is our great God and Savior (Titus 1:3-4); In **Philemon** He is the Equalizer (Philemon 16); In **Hebrews** He is the rest of faith (Heb 4:8-11); In **James** He is the Lord of Sabaoth [hosts] (James 5:4); In **1 Peter** He is the theme of Old Testament prophecy (1 Pet 1:19-21); In **2 Peter** He is the longsuffering Savior (2 Pet 2:21); In **1 John** He is the Word of life (1 Jn 1:1); In **2 John** He is the target of the anti-Christ (2 John 7); In **3 John** He is the personification of truth (3 John 1-4); In **Jude** He is the believer's hope (Jude 24); In **Revelation** He is the victorious Lamb (Rev 5:6) [Have seen this in many bulletins, not sure of its original source].
- **WEEP NOT: BEHOLD, THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, THE ROOT OF DAVID, HATH PREVAILED TO OPEN THE BOOK, AND TO LOOSE THE SEVEN SEALS THEREOF**—Do we find Jesus acting like a lion during His personal ministry? Actually, during our Lord's earthly ministry we find Him acting BOTH as the "LAMB OF GOD" (John 1:29; Acts 8:32) and as the "LION THAT IS OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH" (Rev 5:4-5). When He was attacked PERSONALLY, he acted as the LAMB and did not retaliate (Mt 27:12; 1 Pet 2:22-23). When His TEACHING was attacked, He acted as the LION and boldly defended it (Mt 12:1-8, 22-28; 21:23-27). We are urged to have the mind of Christ (Phil 2:5), so this behooves us likewise to react civilly without losing our "cool" when we might be attacked personally, but it ought to anger us and we ought to STAND AND DEFEND (1 Peter 3:15), whenever the word of our Lord is attacked, misused, abused, twisted, and disrespected!
- Further, consider these words from Alan Adams: "The most readily obvious implication of Jesus as 'head of the church' is that of authority. It's so frustrating when people emphasize one aspect of Jesus and His relationship to us, and ignore others. Some only want to think of Jesus as Savior, but not as Master. Some want the Lamb, but not the Lion (Rev. 5:5-6). It's kind of like some children who only want to see parents as Dispensaries and not Disciplinarians. As 'head of the church,' Jesus is ruler, controller, and guide of the church. What is the practical application of this? Paul says that this authority of Jesus extends to our every action and every word spoken: "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17). Acts 4:7 explains 'in the name of the Lord Jesus' as meaning 'by his power or authority.' A church of Christ, and a 'member' thereof (1 Cor. 12:13), is obligated to act and speak only at the behest, direction or permission of Him who is the Head. It is the height of hypocrisy to give lip service to Jesus as Savior and, by our deeds reject Him as Head."
- **MARK YOUR BIBLES...** "The 5th chapter of the book of Revelation is a marvelous portrait of the majesty of Jesus. Four times in this chapter Christ is designated as the 'Lamb'—an obvious allusion to the sacrificial nature of the Lord's mission. As the chapter opens, John beholds God upon his throne, holding a sealed scroll in his right hand. The context reveals that the document is a record of events yet to transpire. But who is qualified to reveal the future? At first John was sad, because it appeared that no one was worthy to open the scroll. But the apostle was told that the Lion from Judah, the Root of David, had overcome, and so was qualified to break the seals,

and reveal the contents of the scroll. About that time, John saw ‘a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain...’ (5:6). We pause here to make a significant comment. Both of the verbals, ‘standing’ and ‘having been slain’ are perfect tense forms in the original language. The perfect tense denotes action in the past with abiding results. The language thus suggests this: (1) Though the Lamb had been slain, it stood up and remained standing. This is a clear allusion to Christ’s resurrection from the dead (cf. 1:18). (2) Though the Lamb’s death had occurred at a previous point in history, the effects of that death remained; hence, Jesus’ sacrifice is as efficacious today as it was in the first century. The Lamb ‘took’ the book from God’s hand (7)—the tense (perfect) reveals that he kept it—an affirmation that human destiny is in the Lord’s hands. What comfort! These are significant points. Make appropriate notes in the margin of your Bible” [Wayne Jackson, <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/509-revelation-5-6ff-jesus-christ-the-lamb-who-had-been-slain>].

- **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 ODORS, WHICH ARE THE PRAYERS OF SAINTS (5:8)**—*Trying to find authority here for the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship is obviously an act of desperation!* How is it that an item John writes about to describe what he saw in heaven gives authority for matters of worship in our assemblies? It is obvious from looking at this very verse that the language being used is symbolic. We are plainly told that the “vials full of odors” are NOT literal, but stand for the “prayers of the saints.” Even at that, what is described here differs greatly from the assemblies of those who use mechanical instruments in that EVERY ONE OF THEM HAD HARPS. What assembly of our age equips every single person in the assembly with an instrument?
- **#716 in the Songbook:** *Sacred Songs of the Church*, edited by W.D. Jeffcoat is the wonderful hymn written by Tillit S. Teddlie.

**Worthy of praise is Christ our Redeemer; Worthy of glory, honor and power!
Worthy of all our soul’s adoration, Worthy art Thou! Worthy art Thou!**

**Lift up the voice in praise and devotion, Saints of all earth before Him should bow;
Angels in heaven worship Him, saying, Worthy art Thou! Worthy art Thou!**

**Lord, may we come before Thee with singing, Filled with thy Spirit, wisdom and power;
May we ascribe Thee glory and honor, Worthy art Thou! Worthy art Thou!**

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ The golden vials full of odors were literal.
02. _____ The last song or doxology of this chapter praises both God and Christ.
03. _____ The scroll with 7 seals rested in God’s left hand.
04. _____ The tribe mentioned in this chapter is Levi.
05. _____ The song sung by the 28 surrounding the throne spoke of redemption through blood.

MATCHING

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| a. 24 elders | f. The Lamb |
| b. Four beasts | g. The Lion |
| c. Fell down | h. Angels worshipping the Lamb |

- d. Wept much
 - e. Strong angel
 - i. Weak angel
 - j. John
06. ____ Fell down and worshipped the Lamb.
 07. ____ Numbered 10,000 x 10,000 and thousands and thousands.
 08. ____ Had seven horns.
 09. ____ Asked: WHO IS WORTHY?
 10. ____ What John did.

Fill in the Blanks

11. The great chorus praised the Lamb that He was worthy to receive these seven things: (1) ____; (2) ____; (3) ____; (4) ____; (5) ____; (6) ____; (7) ____.
12. The one who would open the book would have to ____ the ____.
13. The reason John wept was: no man was ____.
14. ____ (place a number in the blank) This many sang a new song.
15. **And the four beasts said, _____.**

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Revelation 4 Questions... **01**—False (11); **02**—False (8); **03**—True (6); **04**—True (4); **05**—True (2,3,4,5,6,9,10); **06**—B (10-11); **07**—F (7); **08**—I (5); **09**—G (1); **10**—C (3); **11**—Four Beasts (9); **12**—John, (1-2 and 1.4); **13**—24 Elders (10); **14**—24 Elders (4); **15**—4 Living Creatures (8).

The questions in this section are taken from the book, *Revelation for Christians Today*, by Lonnie Woodruff (page 95).

1. What was God holding in His right hand (5:1)?
A book written within and on the backside. NKJV and ESV et.al., have SCROLL instead of book.
2. How many seals were on this book (5:1)?
It was sealed with SEVEN seals.
3. What significance can be placed on the seven seals?
It was an especially important document. Since "7" is the complete sacred number, this indicates God had sealed the book, and it was completely under his control. It must have contained God's eternal plan for mankind.
4. A strong angel was searching for someone capable of performing what task (5:2)?
To loose the seals of the scroll. To make it possible to OPEN the scroll.
5. Was any man capable of opening the book (5:3-4)?

No man in heaven or on earth was able to open the scroll. No man was found worthy.

6. Who was the only one capable of opening the book (5:5)?
The LION of the Tribe of Judah; the ROOT of David, hath prevailed to open the scroll, and loose the seals of it. Jesus Christ was able—see Genesis 49:9 and Isaiah 11:1.
7. Why was Jesus capable of opening the book (5:9)?
He was worthy to do this because He had been slain. A definite reference to Christ's crucifixion. His death on the cross redeemed us. He thus provided forgiveness of sins to all willing to obey Him.
8. What type of song was sung when Christ took the book out of God's hand (5:9)?
A NEW Song.
9. Why was this a new song (5:9-10)?
NEW because the event it pictures is the crucifixion and at the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ was the VERY FIRST time this song could have been sung. Before Christ died on the cross, this song of redemption could not be sung (Hebrews 9:15; 10:4). Cf., Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16.
10. When Christ was slain for us and became worthy to open the seals of the book, what relationship was established between God and man (5:10)?
The possibility (by obeying the gospel) of having direct access the throne of God by becoming priests (Hebrews 4:15-16) and kings, reigning with Christ.
11. Where do we reign with God (5:10)?
On the earth. Cf., 20:4.
12. If Christ made us kings and priests through His death and made it possible for us to reign with Him on the earth, are we reigning with Him today?
YES, we are reigning with Him on the earth as part of His spiritual kingdom, just as He is reigning on His throne in Heaven.
13. Why was no man capable of opening the book held by God (5:4)?
Because no man could be offered on the cross for the sins of others since each has their own sins.
14. Why did John WEEP because no man could open the book (5:4-5)?
Evidently, opening the scroll represented the beginning of a new era when men would have forgiveness of sin. Since no one could open the book, it appeared to John that there would be no redemption for man. Man would thus be lost eternally.
15. Because Jesus prevailed to open the book, what did He become worthy to receive (5:12-14)?
 - 1) **Power**
 - 2) **Riches**
 - 3) **Wisdom**
 - 4) **Wisdom**
 - 5) **Strength**
 - 6) **Honor**
 - 7) **Blessing**
16. From the information given in this chapter, it seems clear we should not try to determine the actual contents of this book, but instead we should look for the symbolic meaning of the book. What does this book symbolize?

Whatever the exact meaning of the scroll, it is used to show that God has put His Son in control of all things because He gave the supreme sacrifice for our sins. The book must have contained God's eternal plan for mankind.

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL



ANGEL	BEASTS	BEHELD	BOOK	EARTH
ELDERS	EVER	EVERY	FOUR	HAND
HAVING	HEAVEN	LAMB	LOOK	LOOSE
LOUD	MIDST	NEITHER	OPEN	RIGHT
SAYING	SEALS	SEVEN	SLAIN	THEREOF
THEREON	THOUSAND	THRONE	TWENTY	VOICE

