

# Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

## Subject: Get You A Song! They Worship the Redeemer: Revelation 5:1-7)

The focus of attention now shifts to a seven sealed scroll in the hand of God. The scroll could not be read because it was rolled up and sealed (like a Roman wig) with seven seals. John could see writing on both sides of the scroll, which meant that nothing more could be added. What was written was completed and final.

The scroll represents Christ's "title deed" to all that the Father promised Him because of His sacrifice on the cross. "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen [nations] for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (Ps 2:8). Jesus Christ is the "Heir of all things" (Heb 1:2). **He is our beloved "Kinsman-Redeemer" who was willing to give His life to set us free from bondage and to restore our lost inheritance** (Lev 25:23-46; the Book of Ruth; Jer 32:6-15).

### I. Seven Judgments

As Christ removed the seals, various dramatic events took place. **The seventh seal introduced the seven trumpet judgments** (Rev 8:1-2). Then, when the seventh trumpet had blown, the great day of God's wrath was announced, ushering in the "vial [bowl] judgments" that brought to a climax the wrath of God (Rev 11:15, 15:1). It is possible that the trumpet judgments were written on one side of the scroll and the bowl judgments on the other.

**A title deed or will can be opened only by the appointed heir, and this is Jesus Christ.** No one in all the universe could be found worthy enough to break the seals. No wonder John wept, for he realized that God's glorious redemption plan for mankind could never be completed until the scroll was opened. **The redeemer had to be near of kin, willing to redeem, and able to redeem. Jesus Christ meets all of the qualifications. He became flesh, so He is our Kinsman. He loves us and is willing to redeem; and He paid the price, so He is able to redeem.**

**Now we are able to enter into the worship experience described in the remainder of Rev 5. And well discover four compelling reasons why we worship Jesus Christ.**

### 2. Be in the perfect will of God

**Because of who He is** (vv. 5-7). Three unique titles are given to our Lord to describe who He is. First, He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The reference here is to Gen 49:8-10, where Jacob prophetically gave the scepter to Judah and made it the tribe of the kings. **(God never meant for Saul to establish a dynasty, because he came from the tribe of Benjamin. God used him to discipline Israel because the people asked for a king; then He gave them David from the tribe of Judah.)**

The image of "the lion" speaks of dignity, sovereignty, courage, and victory. Jesus Christ is the only living Jew who can prove His kingship from the genealogical records. "Son of David" was a title often used when He was ministering on earth (Matt 1).

### 3. Jesus was David's Lord and David's Son through humanity.

But He is also the Root of David, which means He brought David (and David's be) into existence. As far as His humanity is concerned, Jesus had His roots in David (Isa 11:1,10); but as far as His deity is concerned, Jesus is the Root of David. This speaks, of course, of our Lord's eternity; He is indeed the "Ancient of Days." How the Messiah could both be David's Lord and David's son was a problem Jesus presented to the Pharisees, and they could not (or would not) answer Him (Matt 22:41-46).

When John turned to see, he saw not a lion but a lamb! **Jesus Christ is called "the Lamb" at least twenty-eight times in the Book of Revelation (the Greek word used means "a little pet lamb") and the emphasis is not hard to miss.** God's wrath is "the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev 6:16). Cleansing is by "the blood of the Lamb" (Rev 7:14). The church is "the bride of the Lamb" (Rev 19:7; 21:9).

#### **4. John was the Best man not the Groom**

The theme of "the Lamb" is an important one throughout Scripture, for it presents the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. The Old Testament question, "**Where is the lamb? (Gen 22:7) was answered by John the Baptist who cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).**" The choirs of heaven sing, "Worthy is the Lamb!" (Rev 5:12)

**The description of the Lamb** (Rev 5:6), if produced literally by an artist, would provide a outlandish picture; but when understood symbolically, conveys spiritual truth. Since seven is the number of perfection, we have here perfect power (seven horns), perfect wisdom (seven eyes), and perfect presence (seven Spirits in all the earth). The theologians would call these qualities omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence and all three are attributes of God. **The Lamb is God the Son, Christ Jesus!**

#### **II. We worship Jesus Christ because of who He is. But there is a second reason why we worship Him.**

**Because of where He is** (v. 6). To begin with, Jesus is in heaven. He is not in the manger, in Jerusalem, on the cross, or in the tomb. He is ascended and exalted in heaven. What an encouragement this is to suffering Christians, to know that their Saviour has defeated every enemy and is now controlling events from glory! He too suffered, but God turned His suffering into glory.

But where is Christ in heaven? He is in the midst. The Lamb is the center of all that transpires in heaven. All creation centers in Him (the four living creatures), as do all of God's people (the elders). The angels around the throne encircle the Saviour and praise Him.

#### **1. We worship the Living God!**

He is also at the throne. Some sentimental Christian poetry and hymnody dethrones our Saviour and emphasizes only His earthly life. These poems and songs glamorize "the gentle Carpenter" or "the humble Teacher," but they fail to exalt the risen Lord! We do not worship a Babe in a manger or a corpse on a cross. We worship the living, reigning Lamb of God who is in the midst of all in heaven.

**Because of what He does** (vv. 8-10). When the Lamb came and took the scroll (Dan 7:13-14), the weeping ended and the praising began. God's people and the representatives of God's creation joined their voices in a new song of praise. Note that praise and Prayer were united, for incense is a picture of

prayer rising to the throne of God (Ps 141:2; Luke 1:10). We shall meet the "incense prayers" of the saints again (Rev 6:9-11; 8:1-6).

**What kind of song did they sing?** To begin with, it was a worship hymn, for they said, "Thou art worthy!" To worship means "to ascribe worth," and Jesus alone is worthy. I tried to open each morning worship service with a hymn that lifted the congregation's minds and hearts upward to the Lord Jesus Christ. Too many contemporary songs are "I" centered rather than "Christ" centered. They so emphasize the believer's experience that they almost ignore the Lord's glory. Certainly there is a place for that kind of song, but nothing can compare with adoring Christ in spiritual worship.

**But this song was also a Gospel song!** "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us [some texts read them] by Thy blood." The word translated slain means "violently slain" (Rev 5:6). Heaven sings about the Cross and the blood! I read about a denomination that revised its official hymnal and removed all songs about the blood of Christ. That hymnal could never be used in heaven, because there they glorify the Lamb slain for the sins of the world.

**In Gen 22, a ram was substituted for Isaac, a picture of Christ giving His life for the individual (Gal 2:20).** At Passover, the lamb was slain for each family (Ex 12:3). Isaiah states that Jesus died for the nation of Israel (Isa 53:8; see also John 11:49-52). John affirms that the Lamb died for the whole world! (John 1:29) The more you meditate on the power and scope of Christ's work on the cross, the more humbled and worshipful you become.

**This song was also a missionary song.** Sinners were redeemed "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation", (Rev 5:9). Kindred refers to a common ancestor and tongue to a common language. People means a common race, and nation a common rule or government. God loves a whole world (John 3:16) and His desire is that the message of redemption be taken to a whole world (Matt 28:18-20).

**Perhaps you heard about the Christian who was against foreign missions but somehow happened to attend a missionary rally.** When they passed the offering plate, he told the usher, "I don't believe in missions!" "Then take something out" said the usher. "It's for the heathen. "

**This heavenly hymn was also a devotional hymn,** for it announced our unique position in Christ as "a kingdom of priests." Like Melchizedek of old, believers are kings and priests (Gen 14:17 ff; Heb 7; 1 Peter 2:5-10). The veil of the temple was torn when Jesus died, and the way is opened to God (Heb 10:19-25). We "reign in life" as we yield to Christ and allow His Spirit to work in us (Rom 5:17).

**Finally, this song was a prophetic hymn:** "We shall reign on the earth" (Rev 5:10). When Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will establish His righteous kingdom for 1,000 years; and we shall reign with Him (Rev 20:1-6). The prayers of the saints, "Thy kingdom come!" will then be fulfilled. Creation shall then be set free from bondage to sin (Isa 11:1-10; Rom 8:17-23), and Christ shall reign in justice and power.

What a marvelous hymn! How rich would be our worship if only we would blend all these truths in honoring Him!