

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Revelation 5:1-14 | Session 9 | The Throne in Heaven, Part 2 | Notes

THE VISIONS IN REVELATION (4:1-20:15)

There are seven pairs of visions given to John. The first of each pair of visions pertains to events that are taking place in heaven, and the second part of the pair concerns events taking place on earth. In our last session, we were taken by John into the Throne Room of God. It was a beautiful scene of created beings worshipping and praising God, saying, *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”* Chapter five continues in heaven, praising the Lamb who is worthy and about to take back the Earth from the grip of Satan.

- ❖ The First Vision “In Heaven” (4:1-5:14).
 - The First Vision “On Earth” (6:1-7:8).
- ❖ The Second Vision “In Heaven” (7:9-8:6).
 - The Second Vision “On Earth” (8:7-11:14).
- ❖ The Third Vision “In Heaven” (11:15-19).
 - The Third Vision “On Earth” (11:19).
- ❖ The Fourth Vision “In Heaven” (12:1-12).
 - The Fourth Vision “On Earth” (12:13-13:18).
- ❖ The Fifth Vision “In Heaven” (14:1-5).
 - The Fifth Vision “On Earth” (14:6-20).
- ❖ The Sixth Vision “In Heaven” (15:1-8).
 - The Sixth Vision “On Earth” (16:1-18:24).
- ❖ The Seventh Vision “In Heaven” (19:1-16).
 - The Seventh Vision “On Earth” (19:17-20:15).

1.1 THE FIRST VISION IN HEAVEN, PART TWO (4:1-5:14).

1.1.4 THE THRONE, THE BOOK, AND THE ANGEL (5:1-4).

Verse 1—

And I saw in the right hand of God seated on **the throne a book**. Why his right hand? We will see in a moment that God is going to hand this book to the One who is at His **right hand** (1

Peter 3:22; Hebrews 1:3). The Greek word for **book** is *biblion* and is likely a scroll. This scroll contains writing on both sides and is **sealed with seals**, just like we might imagine a letter being sealed with adhesive; this probably means wax seals.

The Chief angel Michael told Daniel, at the end of his book, to *“Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end”* (Daniel 12:4), ...and Daniel said, *“How long shall it be to the end of these wonders...What shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”* (Daniel 12:6,8,9).

This scene in heaven is that time spoken of in Daniel.

Verse 2-4—

A strong angel, or mighty. Daniel describes this heavenly scene around the throne and those ministering to God as, *thousand thousands...and ten thousand times ten thousands* standing before the throne of God (Daniel 7:10). Therefore, this heralding angel **proclaims with a loud** (Greek: *megas*) **voice** (Greek: phone), **Who is worthy to open the book, and to loosen the seals?**

This scroll and the call for someone to open it is more than just a continuation of Daniel’s vision in Daniel 12. To understand what is about to take place, we need to think back to Genesis 3, when Man gave up his inheritance to live in God’s Paradise. Because Eve was deceived and Adam willingly gave in to sin, the dominion they enjoyed over the Earth (Genesis 1:26,28) and their close fellowship (Genesis 3:8) with God was forfeited and handed over to Satan. He is now in possession of this world. Jesus called Satan *“The prince of this world”* (John 12:31). But not forever. A Redeemer was promised (Genesis 3:15).

Therefore, the question from this angel is, “Who has the right to redeem the forfeited inheritance? Is there a Redeemer?”

The worthiness of what needs to be accomplished is so great that no *created being* can attempt to open the book. No one responded; **no man in heaven, earth, neither under the earth** who **was able to open the book** or to even **look thereon**. John records, **and I wept much** because of it. We don’t get any indication that John knows what is inside the scroll, but it must have had something in its appearance that made it clear that it had to be opened!

1.1.5 THE PROPHESED ONE WHO CAN OPEN THE BOOK (5:5-7).

Verse 5—

One of the 24 elders observes John weeping and assures him that there is One who can open it! It is He **that hath prevailed to open the book**. The Greek word for **prevailed** is from the root word, *Nike*. We know the brand name, but the word means *victory or conquer*.

There is a **victorious** one, the elder proclaims! **Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah**. In Genesis 49:9-10, Jacob (whose name was later changed to Israel) was the father of twelve sons (hence, the *children of Israel*), one of them being **Judah**, whom Jacob predicted would be a fierce lionlike dominance over his enemies and who would rule. The Genesis passage also predicts the coming of *Shiloh* (A Jewish title for the Messiah), who will gather all of Israel unto Himself. The fulfillment of the Genesis passage is found in the words of the **elder** in heaven who is speaking to John.

The Root of David is another prophesied name of the Messiah. David was from the line of Judah, *“And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse (the father of David), Which shall stand for an ensign of the people...”* (Isaiah 11:10).

Verse 6—

John has described the throne and those around the throne, and now he sees in the **midst of the throne and four zoons (the living creatures) and elders**, there **stood a Lamb that had been slain, having seven horns**. A horn is the emblem of power and strength. A horn was, among other things, used to call men to arms (Joshua 6:5), it was something that figuratively meant strength (1 Samuel 2:1), and it was a vessel to carry oil to anoint a king (1 Samuel 16:13). Seven is the number of perfection. **Seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God**, we have already seen, are servants of some kind.

Verse 7—

The Lamb **came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sitteth on the throne**.

The Lamb, the Son of Man (Jesus Christ, John 1:29; 51), is now *receiving His kingdom*. We see this scene in Daniel 7:9-14, although, in Daniel’s vision, he did not see the seven-year Tribulation (Remember, that was sealed up in Daniel 12).

1.1.6 ALL OF HEAVEN BREAKS FORTH IN PRAISE (5:8-14).

Verses 8,9,10—

John saw that heaven broke out in complete praise when the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, and the Lamb had taken the book. In Scripture, the **harp** brings joy and praise to Israel (1 Chronicles 15:28; Psalm 33:2). **The vials of incense** (odours) and aroma before the Lord **which**

are the prayers of the saints. This could refer to the prayers of all Jews who have ever prayed for the Redeemer to come.

And they sang a new song. I have speculated many times that *only* human beings sing, so it looks like I may need to adjust my theology because here, it appears that the 24 elders and the four beasts are singing here. Whenever we speculate, we must always be ready to change our assumptions if new evidence is uncovered or revealed.

But, who is the **new song** coming from?

Notice the verse says **“they” sung a new song.** Who are **they**? We think it is the **four beasts** and the **four and twenty elders.** But is it?

If we look closer, **they** could point back to the prayers of the saints. This new song could be coming up from the **prayers of the saints.** The subject is **the prayers,** and the prayers belong to the **saints.** So, I propose that **“they sung”** needs to be connected to **the Saints.**

I get this interpretation from verse 9, **and hast redeemed us to God,** and verse 10, where the song lyrics say, **and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on earth.** Certainly, the beasts and the 24 elders are not redeemed and will not reign on earth. That privilege has always been reserved for Israel.

The confusion over who is singing this song is exacerbated by the translation of the *Critical Text*, which omits the word “us” in verses 9 and 10. The Critical text reads:

Critical Text	Textus Receptus
“And by your blood who God ransomed from every tribe and language and people and nations.” Revelation 5:9 (ESV)	“And hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Revelation 5:9 (KJV)
“And you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:10 (ESV)	“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:10 (KJV)

The Critical text has the four beasts and the elders singing, but the Textus Receptus has the song coming from the prayers of the saints.

In chapter 1:6, the same phrase “kings and priests” is given. Look how that very same phrase is translated from the Critical Text and the Textus Receptus in that passage:

Critical Text	Textus Receptus
“And he made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father.” Revelation 1:6 (ESV)	“And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.” Revelation 1:6 (KJV)

The KJV stays consistent in chapters 1 and 5, but the ESV (based on the Critical Text) is inconsistent. I always default to the Textus Receptus; therefore, I will stick with my speculation that only humans sing!

Verses 11,12—

The praise around the throne continues with a perfect (seven is the number of perfection) sevenfold list of attributes of the One who can open the scroll. **Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive: Power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.** The word “and” before each noun is what E.W. Bullinger¹ identifies as a *polysyndeton figure of speech*, which is put there to compel us to stop and consider each of the seven features of the Lamb’s worthiness individually.

Verse 13—

In a previous study, we saw how numbers in Scripture are spiritually significant². For example:

One – is to commence, as in Creation: First day, or first light, etc.

Two— Denotes difference, e.g., if two different persons agree in testimony, it is conclusive.

Three—Is completeness: e.g., Jesus rose on the third day.

Four—Always pertains to Earth and God’s creative works.

Five—Denotes Divine grace. It is 4 + 1, God adding His gifts and blessing to the works of His hands.

Six—Denotes the human number; Man was created on the sixth day.

Seven—Shows perfection, as seen above.

All of creation proclaims the blessing of the Lamb taking the scroll. They present a fourfold proclamation, **Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power.**

Verse 14—

And worshipped him that liveth forever and ever. This is consistent with 4:9.³

1.2 THE FIRST VISION ON EARTH (6:1-7:8)

¹ Bullinger, Ethelbert W. *The Companion Bible: Being the Authorized Version of 1611 with the Structures and Notes, Critical, Explanatory and Suggestive and with 198 Appendixes.* Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2018. Print.

² Ibid.

³ The Critical text leaves out (all modern versions) *him that liveth forever and ever.*

1.2.1 THE OPENING OF THE SIX SEALS⁴ (6:1-17).

John sees this vision in Heaven, but what he sees in Heaven will take place on the earth. We come now to the *four horsemen of the apocalypse*. The Bible never uses that phrase, but it is one we most certainly have all heard. The first four seals that are opened pertain to riders on a horse. Most will say that beginning with chapter six, we have the start of the seven-year Tribulation. I want to challenge that assumption and speculate that the seven years will not begin until the sixth seal is broken, and I'll explain why when we get there.

Verse 1—

The Lamb opened one of the seals. One of the four beasts is either instructing John to **come and see** what is about to take place at the opening of the seal, or it is instructing the horseman to *Go!* The word **come** can also be translated as **go**.

Verse 2—

John saw a **white horse**. Some say this is Christ because of the **white horse**, but why would Christ be represented as the Lamb and the one **that sat** on the horse? In this rider's hand was a **bow, and a crown was given unto him**. All of the horses are *judgment horses*. They are given authority to inflict judgment by Christ, who opens the seals. This first rider **went forth conquering and to conquer** by authority of Christ.

Who is the rider on the **white horse**?

Thomas Newberry, a theologian, who died in 1901, compares the first six seals in Revelation 6:1-1, with the prophecy of Christ given to the disciples on the mount of Olives in Matthew 24:3, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world? We will look at these parallel passages as each seal is broken.

Seal #1 The False Christ (Antichrist)	"And Jesus answered and said unto them, take heed that no man deceives you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall deceive many." Matthew 24:4,5.	"And behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Revelation 6:2
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We will continue this discussion on seal #1 next time.

⁴ The seventh seal will be opened in the Second Vision In Heaven (8:1-6).