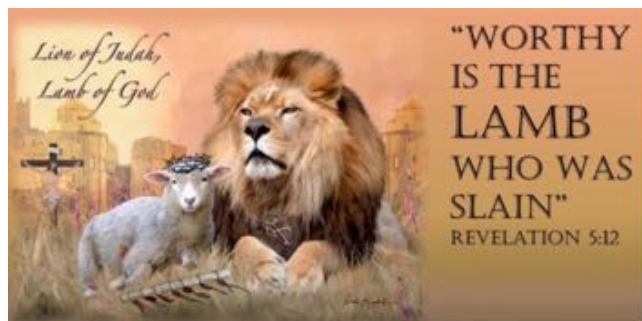


Last week, we read John’s account of being “in the spirit” in heaven before the throne of God. He observed the cherubim worshipping, and he saw the 24 elders participating in all of this worship. Now John’s attention is drawn to a scroll in the hand of Him who sits upon that throne.

***5 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. <sup>2</sup> Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” <sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>4</sup> So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>5</sup> But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” (Revelation 5:1-5, NKJV).***

During our trip to Greece, when we were on the Island of Patmos, there was a guy selling copies of the scrolls of the Book of Revelation outside of the cave where John lived when he was writing out the Book of Revelation. That gives me an idea of the size of the scroll that John was seeing here in chapter five.

John describes the scroll as being “written inside and on the back.” The scroll is complete. It can have nothing taken from it or added to it. Then John sees a strong angel (perhaps Michael) asking, “who is worthy to open the scroll and loosen the seals?” No man was found worthy to open the scroll. There is a lot of debate about what exactly is on the scroll. Some scholars think that it is the Title Deed of the Earth upon which are written the redemption conditions and all sorts of things like that. But for me, the logical thing is that the scroll contains all of the events that are about to happen moving forward. Remember one of our rules of interpretation is just to take the simplest logical meaning.



John weeps in his dream/vision because he can’t determine the information contained in the scroll, and he has been asked to write down “the things that will be.” Then one of the elders tells John that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of Jesse, has prevailed and is able to open the scroll. Those titles belong to

Jesus. He is the Lion of Judah and the Root of Jesse.

When Jacob was old and dying, he prophesied over each of his sons. That passage in Genesis 49 contains one of my favorite Messianic passages in the Bible. Concerning Judah, Jacob prophesies:

<sup>9</sup> *Judah is a lion's whelp;  
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.  
He bows down, he lies down as a lion;  
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?*

<sup>10</sup> *The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.* (Genesis 49:9-10, NKJV).



That word "Shiloh" has been debated among Jewish scholars for millenia. It is very interesting term. When I was in seminary, Dr. James Wicker explained to me that it is contrived from Hebrew words clustered together meaning "to Him unto whom it belongs." Others expand that to be "He whose it is" or "that which belongs to him."<sup>1</sup> The scepter belongs to none but Jesus. The scepter that "shall not depart from Judah" means He'll hold the authority forever. This is a messianic prophesy on many levels. We read about this "root" of Jesse. The word "root" is an interesting word because it is the same word from which the word "Nazareth" comes. Jesus came from the root of Jesse AND He grew up in Nazareth. Isaiah speaks of this "branch" coming out of Jesse.

## נֹצֵר – Branch (Natzter)

<sup>11</sup> *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,  
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,  
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The Spirit of counsel and might,  
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.* (Isaiah 11:1-2, NKJV).

<sup>6</sup> ***And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.*** <sup>7</sup> ***Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*** (Revelation 5:6-7, NKJV).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://christiananswers.net/dictionary/shiloh.html>



Now John sees not a Lion, but a wounded lamb in the midst of the 24 elders. Rabbi Daniel used to preach to us and stress the two sides of the Messiah coin. Jesus is the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world, but He is also a strong and powerful Lion. The Messiah as a Lamb had seven horns (perhaps meaning all powerful-omnipotent) and seven eyes (perhaps all-seeing-omniscient). These of course are two of the attributes of the essence of God. The explanation of the "Spirits" follows in that these are the "Seven Spirits of God" we just read of in Isaiah chapter 11. The Lamb with the eyes is Jesus. Although He has all strength (horns), He appears as though He had been slain. Perhaps Jesus will carry the marks of His earthly suffering forever. It is in and by His suffering and blood that He was made to be worthy above all others. Remember "worthy" and "worship" come from the same Anglo-Saxon root word in our language. Jesus is worthy of our worship.

***<sup>8</sup> Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying:***

***"You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,  
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood  
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,  
<sup>10</sup> And have made us kings and priests to our God;  
And we shall reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:8-10, NKJV).***

The four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down in worship before the Lamb. They each had harps (instruments of worship), and golden bowls of burning incense. Incense often represents the prayers of the saints making their way up to heaven.

Only the "Lamb" is worthy to take the scroll because He was slain. And the purpose of His death is stated. He was slain to redeem all people, from every tribe and nation. This reminds us that God's plan of salvation is for every race and tribe in the earth. This reminds me of the lyrics I heard as a child when we sang: "Jesus loves the little children, all the little children of the world; red and yellow black and white, they are precious in His sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world." He has made us kings and priests to our God. We then hear the statement repeated that we will reign on the earth. It is easy for me to contemplate resting, but I'm not sure how we'll partake in the ruling and reigning part in the millennial kingdom, but it will happen. Some Christian groups teach that we are already reigning on the earth, but we are not. That is something called

“kingdom or dominion” theology. For the time being, Paul tells us that Satan is temporarily the “god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4). Three times we are told in scripture that he is “prince of this world,” meaning he holds sway over all those who do not follow Christ. That’s a lot of people.

***11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: (Revelation 5:11-12a, NKJV).***

John looks around and sees MILLIONS of angels, creatures, and elders singing the following words:

***“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
To receive power and riches and wisdom,  
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”***

***13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:***

***“Blessing and honor and glory and power  
Be to Him who sits on the throne,  
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”***

***14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever. (Revelation 5:12b-14, NKJV).***

We are back again where we left off last week. We are watching worship. Real worship starts when we get our eyes off of ourselves and we put our eyes on God. We briefly reviewed the Hebrew word *avodah*. That is the Hebrew word meaning three things: worship, service, and labor. It is God’s word for ALL THREE. Many think that worship can only be expressed with hands up singing praise to God, but God’s definition is much broader than that. We can do many different things to engage in worship. Everything around us and in our lives should be a “praise prompter.” My dad used to look at green plants and praising the Lord, He would say, “Just think about photosynthesis! Think about how God allows the plants to live and the earth to breathe. He put it all in balance.” He used to marvel at the presence of DNA in each of our cells. He would tell me, “son, DNA is God’s fingerprint in the world”. When dad declared these truths, he was engaging in worship. Admiring nature and proclaiming God’s evidence in it is worship.

Our recognition of the world around us should stimulate worship. I’ve heard it said that “Our theology should form our hymnology.” When we sing of God’s attributes, we are engaging in worship. Worship includes, but is not limited to the following:

- 1) We can worship through music. *Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth.<sup>2</sup> Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. <sup>3</sup> Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. (Psalm 96:1-3, NKJV).* We sing of God's eternal nature. We sing of his truths.
- 2) We can worship through prayer. *Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. (Psalm 141:2, NKJV).* When we speak to the Lord and listen for His voice we are in worship.
- 3) We can worship through praise and thanksgiving. *Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! <sup>2</sup> While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. (Psalm 146:1-2, NKJV).* Words of praise, adoration, and recognition of God's presence in our lives is worship.
- 4) We can worship through study of God's Word. Scripture tells us: "*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; <sup>8</sup> The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; <sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. <sup>10</sup> More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. (Psalm 19:7-10, NKJV).*
- 5) We can worship the Lord in our silence as we remember the great truths of God. *<sup>3</sup> And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. <sup>4</sup> But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. (John 16:3-4a, NKJV).*
- 6) We can worship God through giving. We must remember that God does not need our money, but He wants our hearts. Jesus said "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21). Jesus expands on this topic of giving in Luke 6:38. *<sup>38</sup> Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." (NKJV).*
- 7) We can worship God as we serve others. *<sup>13</sup> For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup> For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Galatians 5:13-14, NKJV).*

The text clearly tells us that Jesus is to be worshipped because through Him all things were created and through Him all the sins of the world were paid for. This salvation is available by grace alone. When I taught my 2017 series of walking through the Torah, I

explained that the Hebrew text does not emphasize the “when” or the “how” of creation. IT EMPHASIZES THE WHO. This was a revolutionary text in ancient literature. The text reads “בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” He was self-existent before all times. He brought “something out of nothing.” I was recently watching a discussion on Youtube about the “big bang” and the persistent question is where did the tight little cluster of matter come from that blew up leading to the universe. God created the universe OUT OF NOTHING.

The Hebrew word for “created” here is **barah ברא**. It carries the idea of a continual creation. I have a rabbi friend who explains that God continues to create, like a farmer filling up a barn with fresh produce. Hebrew has another word for create: **assah עשה** , but it is a creation from something pre-existing. It is to assemble from existing materials. It is to mold something. Only God can create from nothing. He is to be praised.

We worship Yahweh as our God because He created the entire universe out of nothing. We worship Him as our redeemer because He humbled Himself to come in the form of a man named Yeshua who died on the cross for our sins. He redeems us. He loves us. He wants a relationship with each of us. We secure that relationship when we believe and accept Him as our Savior and our only object of worship.

Chapters four and five of Revelation simply establish the “Big Idea” that Jesus is the Creator of All and the Redeemer of all. He is worshipped continually in heaven, and He should be worshipped continually in our hearts. Worship begins with a shift in attitude OFF OF OURSELVES AND ONTO HIM.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at [uniongrove362@gmail.com](mailto:uniongrove362@gmail.com) or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.