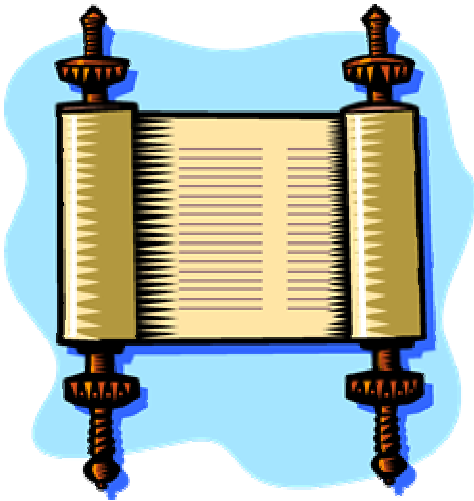


The Revelation of Jesus Christ: The plan of eternity

Chapter 5

Introduction to Chapter 5



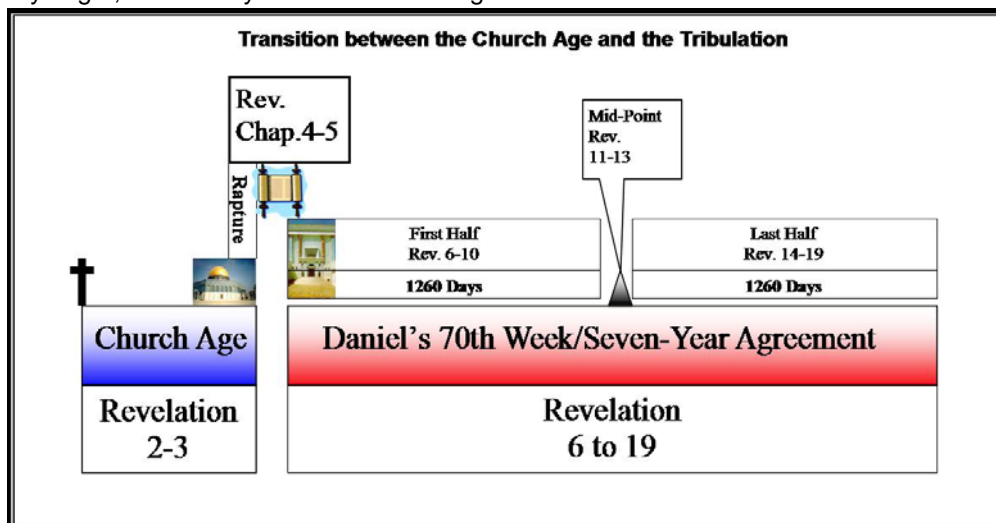
Chapter 5 continues chapter 4, the scene in Heaven focuses to events taking place on the throne of God. In chapter 4, we received an overview of events around the throne. John caught up to heaven, reported to the reader what he saw.

John introduces the reader to the throne of God, the four living creatures (Cherubim), the 24 elders, and the sea of glass before the throne. In Chapter 5, John directs reader's attention back to the throne. On the throne, God sits with a scroll, having seven seals, no one in heaven or on earth is able to open the book. John weeps, for lack of a person who can open the scroll, a lamb then appears which is able to open the scroll. All of heaven falls before the throne of God and the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

The opening of this scroll, introduced in chapter 5, puts events into motion leading to the return of Jesus Christ in Chapter 19 of Revelation. Chapter 6 begins with the Lamb opening the seals on the scroll. The opening of the scroll begins the period known as Daniel's 70th week, the seven-year tribulation period, a period of unparalleled horror and destruction on the earth.

The beginning of the tribulation period begins with the confirmation of an agreement between Israel and the world, allowing the Temple to be rebuilt and animal sacrifice to resume. Currently, the *Dome of the Rock*, the third holiest site to Islam occupies land where the Jewish Temple is to be rebuilt. The building of the Temple can only follow the destruction of this building holy to Islam. The destruction of the Dome will unleash the Islamic world against Israel, putting events in motion leading to the start of the tribulation period in chapter 6.

Between the rapture, Chapter 4 and the beginning of the tribulation period, chapter 6, is period of pause. During this pre-tribulation, post-rapture period, people will find Christ throughout the earth. The world will also find itself in political upheaval as the order of nations realigns. While these events are taking place on earth, in heaven the events of Revelation chapter 4 and 5 will be taking place. How long this period is not clear, it could be weeks, months or even years. This period will conclude with establishment of the Jewish Temple and a worldwide peace agreement enforced by military might, for seven-years. This seven-agreement is Daniel's 70th week.



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The Seven Sealed Book

RE 5:1 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.

RE 5:2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"

RE 5:3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

RE 5:4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

Revelation 5:1-4

Right hand: John again focuses on events taking place on the Throne. God, seated on the His throne has a scroll in His right hand. The right hand is the position of honor. Christ when he ascended to heaven was seated at the right hand of the Father. (Acts 5:31, 7:55, Hebrews 1:13, 8:1, 10:12,12:2) Stephan before he died, while he was stoned, saw Jesus Christ standing at the right-hand of God's throne.

Scroll. The Greek word for scroll is *bibliōn* *Biblion* and is translated book. Books as we know them today did not exist during this period. The scroll was made of Papyrus, Parchment or Vellum¹, individual sheets were stitched or glued together to make a scroll. The scroll was then rolled.

What was the scroll in the hand of God? The identity of this scroll has been the subject of debate. The context of the scroll reveals its identity as the title deed to the earth.

Sealed scrolls were used for property records in ancient Israel, one copy would remain open and the other copy sealed and stored to verify the true owner of the property. (Jeremiah 32:9-14) The scroll in the right hand of God is the sealed property deed. In Jeremiah 32, Babylon is about to conquer Judah and Jeremiah has a cousin Hanamel who has property he wants to sell, which he feels will be worthless after the Babylonian invasion. God instructs Jeremiah to buy the property, as cousin, Jeremiah has the right of redemption. Jeremiah buys the property and the deed is sealed before the court.

This sealed scroll is property deed which requires the right person to claim ownership of the said property.

Seven seals The use of the seal has an ancient history and was a way one party would guarantee the item sent whether document or goods was received in the order sent and not tampered with. John Walvoord, quoting Stauffer writes,

Roman law required a will to be sealed seven times as illustrated in the wills left by Augustus and Vespasian for their successors²

Strong angel The term strong angel is used 2 more times in Revelation (10:1,18:21), and comes from the Greek word *ἰσχυροῦς* *ischuros* and means might or powerful. This angel makes the proclamation to all of creation. He is asking someone to step forward

who can take the challenge. We see an example of this in the book of Isaiah, when the armies of Assyria surrounded Jerusalem, Rabshakeh was by the king of Assyria (Ish.37), he challenged the Jerusalem to mount a defense against his king. This angel asks someone to step forward who can open the scroll.

The angel literally cries out in a *megala* *Megas*, meaning great *φωνή* *Phone*, meaning sound. This is where we the term Megaphone comes from meaning "great sound".

Who is worthy The angel asks who is worthy. The Greek word, *ἀξίω* *Axios* means weighing, having weight, having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much. The picture here is of a scale, the angel is asking who is able to counter the balance in the scale.

Open the scroll Only the person worthy could open the sealed scroll. Here the picture of kinsman redeemer comes to mind. The position of kinsman, was a relative who had the resources to "Redeem" or purchase what his relative lost. The angel is making the offer to the universe, is someone able to take possession of the sealed scroll?



The seal of King Hezekiah

¹ Papyrus was made from the Papyrus plant, Parchment was developed in Pergamum and used leather while Vellum used a finer specially treated leather. The codex's later replaced scrolls, as the sheets were later placed on top of each other and stitched on a side forming the early book, as we know it today.

² The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John F. Walvoord, Moody Press 1966, Pg. 113

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No one... heaven...earth John is in heaven as spectator and reporter watching the scene take place. The conclusion to the angel's proclamation was no one in Heaven or on earth was worthy to take possession and open the seals.

No angel in heaven was worthy to open the document because angels were not "Kinsman" to humanity. Second, God had already surveyed all of humanity from Adam until the end of time with one conclusion; none of humanity was worthy or able.

2 God looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3 Every one of them has turned aside; They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.

Psalm 53:2-3

God saw humanity's situation was without hope and there was no one who could intercede on the behalf of man, therefore God Himself would rescue man. Isaiah writes about the bankrupt state of humanity in Isaiah 59. God Himself comes to man's rescue, being called the *Arm of the Lord* (Psalm 98:1, Isaiah 40:10, 51:9, 52:10, 53:1, 59:16)

16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

Isaiah 59:16

No angel or man was able to answer the call of the strong angel. Humanity was without hope of redemption.

I wept John as spectator saw the state of humanity, and begins to cry because he also sees there is no hope for humanity. No man or angel in all creation, from the beginning to the end, could respond to the angel's loud cry. John sees the hopeless condition of humanity.

The Lamb of God

RE 5:5 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."

RE 5:6 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.

RE 5:7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

Revelation 5:5-7

Elders One of the 24 elders, who was seated around the throne approached John and told him not to cry or mourn over the lost condition of humanity. The elder then begins to explain to John the victory of the Messiah, the Redeemer of humanity.

The Lion The elder in his consoling of John, explains to John the nature and the work of the Messiah via his titles. The first title used is Lion of the tribe of Judah. This is reference to the Jacob's prophecy in Genesis about the coming Messiah. (Genesis 49:9-10) Judah is called a Lion, because out of Judah would come the Messiah (Shiloh) who would rule the world. In the pictures of Messiah in the Old Testament, we see two distinct portraits, one a *conquering king* (Lion) the other a *suffering servant* (Lamb).

The Root of David The reference to David's root comes from Isaiah 11:1. The Messiah would be a descendent of King David as promised to David by Nathan the prophet. (2 Samuel 7:12-14)

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious."

Isaiah 11:1,10

The Messiah will reign on David's throne over the earth, this is the picture of the conquering king Messiah, the Lion aspect of king Messiah. (Isaiah 9:7, Psalm 132:11)

Midst of the throne John's attention is now drawn to the center of the throne of God. It is important to understand the location. The center indicates the source of authority and nature of the referent.

A Lamb John now sees a lamb in the center of the throne. A first year male lamb is what Israel was required to sacrifice for the Passover (Exodus 12:3-7) The blood of the lamb was then to be placed over the lintels, when the angel of death passed by, he would "Passover" the homes with the blood of the lamb.

The term used for lamb in Revelation is *Arnion*. This word is used over 28 times in Revelation and

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means little lamb. The term for lamb used in the Gospel of John, Acts and Peter (John 1:29,36,Acts 8:32; I Peter 1:19) is *Agnos* and means lamb, not in the diminutive sense, but in the sacrificial sense. The word lion, in contrast to lamb appears once in the book of Revelation.

When John saw Christ, he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) The Lamb was a picture of the suffering, sacrificial nature of the Messiah who would die for the sins of the world. The two natures of Messiah are pictured in the Elders description of the Redeemer, the *Lion* and the *Lamb*. Both pictures of the Messiah are presented in Isaiah 52:12 to 53:13, the servant who is pictured who is called the *Arm of the Lord* (Isaiah 52:10,53:1) will be revealed in two different manners. The Servant who will be exalted and very high (The Lion) will first



have his appearance marred or corrupted (Lamb slain). In the end, the kings of the earth will see the servant and as He really is and they will shut their mouths, for what had not been told them they will see (The Lion) (See also Isaiah 59:16)

13 Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

15 So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

Isaiah 52:13-15

Isaiah then goes on into detail describing what the Messiah will go through as the (Lamb slain) the "Suffering Servant" in the rest of the 53rd chapter.

1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

9 And they made His grave with the wicked-But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

Isaiah 53:1,3,7-9

Slain The fact the Messiah is killed, is one of the main points in the 70 weeks of Daniel. God in fact gives the exact day the Messiah dies, 539 years before He is born. (Daniel 9:24-27) The Messiah dies as our "Passover" sacrifice.

Seven horns John sees the lamb with seven horns, horns are used throughout scripture to represent authority and kingship. In Daniel 8, for example Greece under Alexander the Great is pictured as one horned goat attacking Media-Persia the two horned goat. (Daniel 8:5-7,20-21)

Further, the end-times ruler, the little horn, in Daniel 7 is pictured as one of 10 kings all represented by horns. This is again reinforced in the 13th chapter of the book of Revelation (Rev. 13:1) when beast arising out of the sea is pictured having 10 horns.

Seven is the number of completeness in scripture, here the "Little" slain lamb, the suffering servant is on the throne in complete authority despite his appearance to those in the world, as the "Little Lamb".

Seven eyes The seven eyes on the Lamb represents, the seven-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 11:2, Revelation 1:4,3;1,4:5 Zechariah 3:9, 4:2,11-14) The "Little" slain lamb also sees all, nothing is hid from his sight.

Took the scroll Only the lamb is able to take the scroll from the hand of God the Father who is seated on the throne. The interaction between God the Son and God the Father was pictured in the book of Daniel over 500 years before the birth of Christ in Daniel 7:13-14.

13 "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed

Daniel 7:13-14

Here, the son of man (the lamb) approaches the Ancient of Days (the Father) and is given an

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eternal kingdom over all humanity (the lion), all people will serve/worship the son of man, who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

The Lamb worshipped

RE 5:8 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.

RE 5:9 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,

RE 5:10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." **Revelation 5:8-10**

Fell down Earlier, the strong angel called out for anybody in Heaven and on earth to open the scroll. Nobody was able to answer the call of the angel, which caused John to weep. The only person who could open the book was God Himself, who became man and died on the cross as our redeemer. Jesus Christ, who came from Heaven to earth, became man making him our near "kinsman" and thus giving Him the right as man to redeem man. Jesus was both fully man, and fully God, Paul in Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 to 11 explains the incarnation. For this same reason the Cherubim, the living creatures and the 24 elders fall down in worship before the Lamb. The Lamb is fully God in the midst of the throne.

The Lamb, is in the midst of the throne demonstrating He is fully God, and worthy of worship. If the suffering Messiah, the Lamb, were not God, the creatures and the 24 elders would be in sin by falling down before Him. (Exodus 20:3-5)

Harp Only two musical instruments are mentioned in heaven, the trumpet and the lyre or harp. The harp was the instrument used by David and one of the instruments used before the Lord in worship in ancient Israel. (I Chron. 15:28)

The Lamb is worshiped by those in Heaven, with both music and prayer.

Prayers of the saints The 24 elders have golden bowls with incense, which represent the prayers of saints. The altar of incense in the Temple, was a type, illustrating the prayers of the saints who worship before the throne of God. Like fragrant smell of incense and the smoke the drifts toward heaven, prayers are pictured as incense before the throne.

The elders, representing all of the redeemed bowing before the lamb, with their harps and prayers stand as sympathetic representatives of all the saints.

New song The fact these in Heaven are singing a new song, signifies a change of events. This new song, validates these are redeemed saints who are celebrating redemption. The song is new because a new event has happened, redemption, the resurrection of the dead.

Redeemed The word used in Greek here is *ajgorazw* *Agorazo* which means to be in the market place, to attend it, to do business there. Jesus purchased the saints by His blood. The Lamb was sacrificed for the sins of humanity. Jesus became our "Kinsman" Redeemer, who by becoming man had the right of redemption, this is demonstrated in the laws of Moses. (Numbers 27;1-11). Without Jesus Christ, man had no hope man was completely lost.

Made us The controversy regarding this verse is in the manuscripts. Some manuscripts read "Made them" and not "Us". Most recent scholarship from the most reliable manuscripts affirm the translation of "Made us". This is important because the argument that the 24 elders are angels does not exist if the correct translation is "Made us". The American Standard Version of 1901 uses the alternative manuscript source and translates this section as follows.

9 And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood [men] of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, 10 and madest them [to be] unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon earth.
Revelation 5:9-10 (ASV)

The song is personal and includes the 24 elders who are singing about their own redemption, angels do not require redemption. The song by the elders represents the redeemed and is for all the saved, from every nation, tribe and tongue.

Kings During the Millennium the saints will rule and reign with Christ. Jesus, in Matthew 19:28-29 informed the disciples they would rule over the 12 tribes of Israel during the regeneration or resurrection. At the beginning of the Millennium, the resurrected saints will be appointed to positions of authority to administer the *Millennium Kingdom* of Messiah.

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Priests Those who know Christ are part of a royal priesthood. Priest mediated between God and men in Israel, representing men before the Temple. In the same way, those who know Christ, represent or administer salvation to those who do not know Christ. Christ has given us the responsibility to tell humanity about Him, to administer salvation to the world.

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

1 Peter 2:5,9

Reign The reigning of the saints is a theme presented in both Old and New Testaments. Daniel points to the day when the kingdoms of this world are turned over to the saints, who will rule with the "Son of man" in the coming age. (2 Tim. 2:12, Revelation 20:4,6)

Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

Daniel 7:27

The parable of the talents and mina (Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:12-26) Jesus presents a nobleman who entrusts his servants with his possessions while he is gone. When the nobleman returns he rewards his servants based on what they did with his possessions entrusted to their care. In Luke, the parable of the mina, the faithful servants receive rule over cities in the kingdom the nobleman went to claim. This parable applies to the promise reward for faithful service to Christ. In the Millennium, saints receive positions of authority based on service in their lifetime.

Angels worship the Lamb

RE 5:11 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,

RE 5:12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"

Revelation 5:11-12

Angels John again expands the picture, expanding the scene from the throne. He describes all voices surrounding the throne, the angelic hosts of heaven. They join the elders and the 4 living creatures of their praise of the Lamb. John numbers the voices at *muriaMurias* (Myriads) times Murias or 10,000 times 10,000 which equals 100 million.

However, the word here is not meant to apply an exact number, but the picture of an innumerable number of angels gathered around the throne, singing and worshiping the Lamb at the center of the throne who just took the book from the right hand of the Father on the throne.

All Creation worship

RE 5:13 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!"

RE 5:14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Revelation 5:13-14

Every creature John then reports hearing every creature acknowledge the throne of God. On the throne are the Lamb and the Father (Rev 5:6). The scene causing the praise of heaven and earth is taking place from the middle of the throne, where the Lamb received the scroll.

All of the universe will one day acknowledge the work of Christ whether they like it or not. Both Isaiah and Paul point to this day in the scripture.

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**Philippians 2:10-11**

22 "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.**Isaiah 45:22-23**