

BLESSED ENDURANCE

THE MESSAGE OF REVELATION

LESSON FOUR: THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN

The glory of God and Christ Revealed (chapters 4-5)

INTRODUCTION

The Son of Man Appears (Daniel 7:9-27)

THE HEAVENS OPENED

Chapters 4-5 are patterned after Daniel 7:9-27

The vision of heaven shows God's authority and sovereignty over all the earth.

- Throne (v.2) (authority)
- The appearance of the one seated on it (v.3) (majesty)
- Flashes of lightning and roaring thunder (v.5) (awesome power)
- The sea of glass (v.6) (power over evil)

The vision of heaven also shows God's purpose and love for creation.

The purpose of all creation is worship.

THE LAMB APPEARS

The scroll symbolizes God's covenant promise to humanity to inherit the earth.

No one in heaven or on earth is worthy to claim this inheritance.

Jesus is pictured as fulfilling all OT prophecies about God's plan to redeem the world.

- But he accomplished this work by sacrificing his life (v.6)
- He therefore can claim humanity's destiny as his own (v.7).

Verses	Worshippers	praise	Meaning
8-10	The 24 elders (representatives of God's people)	The worthiness of the slain-ransoming-kingdom building-kingdoms sharing Lamb	Christ has ransomed a people for himself, created a kingdom, and shares his rule!
11-12	The Myriads of heaven (representatives of all created things)	The worthiness of the slain Lamb to receive all that is God's	Christ has received all the glory that is the Father's (Phil 2:11)!
13-14	All Creation	The lamb is to be given all worship along with he who sits on the throne	Christ's atoning work is bringing all creation back to its purpose!

Revelation 4-5 is a picturing of the Christ-event from heaven's perspective.

- God created all things to worship and enjoy him
- He created humans to receive authority over creation, but they are not worthy because of sin.
- The whole cosmos stands in need of one who is worthy to claim humanity's destiny
- The Son took that destiny and conquered the forces of evil by offering himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the cosmos.
- Because of his sacrifice, he is given authority to consummate God's plan, bringing redemption and shalom to all of God's creation.

DISCUSSION

Q: Revelation 4 gives us a glimpse of the host of heaven. What comes to your mind as you read all the imagery of what John saw? How is this vision different from how people tend to think of heaven?

Q: People often think that God is inattentive to the woes of the created world. How does the drama of chapter 5 correct that view? What has God done about the evil and chaos of the world?

Q: Jesus is given his authority and power because he as “overcome” and “conquered” by suffering on the cross. What connection do you think this has to his letters to the churches? (Use 3:20-21 for help!)