



THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

"In Like a Lion, Out Like a Lamb"
5:5-7

Revelation 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."

Revelation 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.

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

Napoleon Dynamite called the liger "pretty much my favorite animal."

I didn't believe there was such a thing as a liger. There is. It's a hybrid cross between a male lion and a female tiger. Documentation of ligers dates to at least the early 19th century in Asia.

A liger resembles a tiger with diffused stripes. They are the largest cats in the world. A similar hybrid, the offspring of a male tiger and a female lion is called a *tigon*.

Our text features a sort of hybrid description of Jesus Christ. He is both lion and lamb. He's first introduced as the lion:

Revelation 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."

John was sobbing convulsively. We saw that the **elders** are the representatives of the church that is resurrected and raptured to Heaven prior to the Great Tribulation. One of the **elders** began to minister to him.

Good for that guy! There was a lot going on around the throne. Cherubim were leading praises. A mighty angel was making a proclamation. One of the **elders** noticed the 'first-time visitor' and saw he had a need.

We all need to cultivate a greater awareness of folks around us. Even here at church I sometimes see people who are not contacted because we are not paying attention.

The elder boldly ministered to John. He told him it was inappropriate to **weep**! Wow. Sounds rude almost. But he was right. And he didn't just leave it at that. He directed John's gaze to Jesus.

Revelation 5:5 ...Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

The tribe of **Judah** was represented by a **lion**. **The Lion of Judah** is a reference to Genesis 49:10 where the coming Messiah is described as a physical descendant of Judah.

The **Root of David** tells you that the Messiah who was promised somehow preceded King David in time. Jews would recognize the title from the prophecy of Isaiah 11:1,

Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

In Revelation 22:16 Jesus calls Himself **the root and the offspring of David**. In other words, Jesus both preceded **and** was the descendant of King David. How is that possible?

It is only possible because Jesus was and is God for all eternity Who became man. Thus in His pre-existence He preceded David but in His humanity He was a descendant of David's.

Revelation 5:5 ...has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

O, how He has **prevailed**! He came from Heaven to earth in humiliation as God in human flesh. He overcame the trials of human life, the temptations in the wilderness, the agonies of the Garden of Gethsemane, the shame of the Cross at Calvary. He **prevailed** over the grave and rose from the dead. He descended into the lower parts of the earth so that when He ascended to Heaven He led with Him all those through the centuries who had believed in His coming. Yes, He **has prevailed to open the scroll**.

We established why we think the **scroll** is the title document to planet earth. It has been held in trust until the rightful kinsman-redeemer fulfilled the obligations of the debt owed by Adam for having sinned. John was seeing that time in the future when Jesus will **loose its seven seals**. We will see exactly what that means in chapters six through nineteen.

John is ready to see this **lion**, expecting His roar as it were. Instead,

Revelation 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.

It is an interesting moment. The **lion** John expected to see... **is a Lamb!** And not just any lamb. The word is one used of a pet lamb – an especially gentle creature. A lion might be able to prevail against the dragon we will meet later in the Revelation. But a pet lamb?

It was only as a lamb that Jesus could prevail!

Jesus is referred to as the **lion** only once in the Revelation. He is referred to as the **Lamb** about twenty-nine times. It is an incredibly important title and description.

Whenever I encounter the term I can't help but think of the theme of the **lamb** running all through Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation.

After Adam and Eve sinned, God clothed them with the skins of animals. He didn't get them from the Burlington Coat Factory. Those skins came from animals who were sacrificed on their behalf. It was a vivid illustration that the wages of sin is death.

We can't be certain, but I suggest those animals were lambs. One reason to think they were lambs is that Adam and Eve taught their sons about sacrifice; and when you see Abel sacrificing, he brought a lamb.

The patriarchs continued the practice. Then you see a massive sacrifice of lambs at the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt when God instituted the Passover.

Fast forward many centuries and many hundreds of thousands of lambs slain in the Tabernacle then the Temple. John the Baptist sees Jesus and declares, "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world!" He meant to convey that Jesus was the final fulfillment of what had begun in the Garden of Eden. He was the substitute and sacrifice for sin that every previous sacrificial lamb symbolized.

By the way, the annual Passover lamb was a sort of 'pet' lamb. It would be chosen four days prior to its sacrifice. Imagine bringing a little lamb into your home and letting the kids care for it and play with it – only to see it sacrificed for them!

Jesus entered Jerusalem four days prior to His death in perfect fulfillment of the type. He was crucified just as the Passover lambs were being slain in the Temple.

Jesus is neither a lion-like lamb nor a lamb-like lion. He is not a hybrid with some qualities of both. He is both lion and lamb with all the qualities of both.

Jesus had been **in the midst of the throne** the whole time. How could John have missed Him? It's a reminder to us to be looking for Jesus **in the midst of** our meetings, of our ministering, of our music. Miss Him in your midst and you will eventually be overwhelmed – even in spiritual activities. Look for Him, find Him, and you will avoid the weeping.

As though it had been slain reminds you that Jesus bears in His eternal, glorified body the marks of His crucifixion. After the Lord rose from the dead He showed the nailprints to His disciples and again later when Thomas was with them. In the book of Zechariah we see that Israel will recognize Him by those same wounds when He returns at His Second Coming.

Why the scars? So important is the sacrificial offering of Christ in the sight of God that he is forever represented as being in the very act of pouring out his blood for the offenses of man.

Some people want to follow the teachings of Jesus as a great philosopher or religious leader. But that is not how He is represented in Heaven and for eternity. He is represented as the sacrifice for our sins. You can't go there unless you receive His sacrifice on your behalf. Following His teachings is not even possible unless you are first born-again by believing in Him.

Revelation 5:6 ...having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Although we take the Revelation of Jesus Christ literally it doesn't mean it never uses figurative language. Jesus does not have **horns** on His head! **Seven** is the number of completion. **Horns** are symbolic of authority. Jesus has full and complete and perfect authority.

And He doesn't have **seven eyes**. You're told that these represent **the seven Spirits of God** – which we've seen is an Old Testament name for God the Holy Spirit.

These are symbols of omnipotence and omniscience. Even though He is the Lamb who was slain, you are not to pity Jesus. He is powerful.

Revelation 5:6 ...and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

On the Day of Pentecost the church received the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, as He was sent by Jesus to empower His witnesses. The Spirit-filled church will be removed from the earth prior to the Great Tribulation. He will still be active on the earth as Jesus is said to send Him **into all the earth**.

The world will be totally evangelized during the Great Tribulation. Millions will be saved. Most of them will be martyred.

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

The **right hand** is symbolic of authority and power to carry out authority. Taking the **scroll** indicates the moment in which power is conferred. It is a breathtaking moment. A mere seven years later Jesus will return and rule the earth for a thousand years. Immediately following His reign over the earth the final judgment of nonbelievers will occur. Then a new Heaven and a new earth will be created in which we enjoy unbroken fellowship with God for eternity.

We will be in Heaven to witness the moment! Unlike John, there will be no weeping. We'll know what is happening having read about it tonight.