

Lesson 9
Revelation 5

Worshipping the Worthy Lamb

Memory verse: "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29 NIV)

In the Old Testament, one of Messiah's great names used, for example, in Daniel 7:13, is, "the coming one." "The coming one", is always coming to establish a Kingdom. Come in great glory. Nine times in the Book of Revelation, Jesus Christ is called, "The coming one." Seven of the nine times is out of Jesus' own lips. This is the heart of the Book of Revelation. It is the glorious end of redemptive history. It is the culmination of the life of the church. It is the climax of all of God's saving purpose. It's where we're headed.

Prophecy occupies one fifth of Scripture. And of that one fifth, one third of that focuses on the second coming. There are over 650 general prophecies in Scripture of which half of them concern Christ. And out of the 330 or so that concern Christ, 225 of those point to His second coming. Of the 46 Old Testament prophets, less than 10 speak of His first coming. Thirty-six speak of His second coming.

There are over 1,500 passages of the Scripture that refer to the second coming, one out of every 25 verses in the Bible. For each time the Bible mentions the first coming of the Messiah, it mentions His second coming eight times. For each time the Bible mentions the atonement, it mentions His second coming two times.

Jesus referred to His return 21 times and over 50 times in the New Testament we're enjoying to be ready for His return. Yet convocation of church leaders and theologians met in Evanston, Illinois for a conference. And it was reported at that conference that only 10 percent of American Protestant ministers find any significance in the doctrine of the second coming.

Now we wouldn't deny the second coming. But there's an awful lot of Evangelical indifference to it. But Jesus is coming. The promise of God demands it. The words of Jesus demand it. The guarantee of the Holy Spirit demands it. The plan for the church demands it. The plan for Israel demands it. The plan for the nations demands it. The humiliation of Christ demands. And the expectation of the saints demands it.

One of the most breathtaking passages on the second coming is Revelation 5 and we want to look at it. This looks at the second coming from Heaven's vantage point, from the side of Heaven in anticipation of it. Here we meet the conqueror of the world as He is about to come to take over the universe, to redeem it, to destroy the wicked and to establish and bless His people.

The scene as Chapter 5 opens is the same as Chapter 4. The scene is Heaven. In the centre of the scene is the throne of God on a crystal platform with diamond and ruby glory splendour, and an emerald rainbow, lightning and thunder and glorious worship from the hosts of Heaven, all of that in Chapter 4.

The scene is Heaven and the focus is God on His throne being worshiped and shining forth in all His glory and all His splendour. And the scene is the same in Chapter 5. There's no break. All that glorious action, all that glorious praise described in Chapter 4 directed at the All Mighty God becomes directed in Chapter 5 at Christ who is worshiped in the same way God is worshiped, who is described in the same way God is described.

In general, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 of Revelation anticipate the tribulation that breaks forth in Chapter 6. Chapter 6 to 19 is the record of the exploding judgment of God in the world. And it comes through seven seals that unrolled. It comes through seven trumpets that are blown, and seven bowls, saucer-like, that are dumped out on the earth, used to describe facets of this

judgment which ultimately culminate in the return of Christ, described in Chapter 19. So 6 to 19 is the judgment of God poured out on the earth.

At the same time judgment is being poured out, salvation is taking place to a degree never before known in the history of redemption. So many are saved from every tongue and tribe and people and nation, they can't even be numbered. The nation Israel is saved and 144,000 of them are sealed as ministers and missionaries and witnesses. Angels are preaching the Gospel as they're flying across Heaven. Two witnesses are raised from the dead to preach the Gospel so that the City of Jerusalem repents. It's an incredible time described from Chapter 6 to 19. But what you have in chapter four and five is a glimpse into Heaven as the divine war machine begins to move.

Things to learn: 1) The importance of the scroll held by God. 2) Prophecies and Prayers come to pass. 3) Jesus is Worthy of Worship as God.

Q1 What caused John to weep (verse 4) when confronted with the scene before him in heaven?

Q2 Notice the harps and golden bowls in verse 8. What do you think they are meant symbolically?

Q3 Examine verses 5 to 14 in chapter 5, to discover the reasons why Jesus is to be worshipped. Are you in a position to worship Jesus? Why and Why not?