



Week Three – Revelation 4-5

Community Group Study Guide for the week of March 7, 2021

Suggested Reading: Revelation 4-5 prior to meeting. “The Throne Room and The Scroll With the Seven Seals.” For more added background, watch “The Bible Project” and a reflection on Revelation. Fast forward to this section of chapters 4-5 at approximately 3:45 into the video.

Read and Study Revelation 4:1-11.

Open It

1. What do you most look forward to about heaven?
2. What is a place or experience that is difficult for you to describe to others?
3. When and where was your most meaningful worship experience?

Explore It

4. After receiving messages for the seven churches, what did John see? What kind of voice did John hear? ([4:1-8](#))
5. How were the four living creatures around the throne similar? ([4:8](#))
6. What attribute of God did the four living creatures praise again and again? ([4:8](#))
7. How did the twenty-four elders worship the Lord God? ([4:9-10](#))
8. Why did the elders say God was worthy of their worship? ([4:11](#))

Get It

9. What does it mean to worship God?
10. What impressions does this passage give you of God the Father?
11. How would you describe God to someone who had never read the Bible?
12. What changes are you moved to make in your life / in your life of worship, when you reflect on the holiness and majesty of God Almighty?

Apply It

13. What reminders can you use this week to keep the reality and glory of God at the front of your mind?
14. How can you begin today to make praise and worship of God a more regular part of your life?

Life Application Bible Notes - Rev 4:1-11

Chapter 4

4:1 Chapters 4 and 5 record glimpses into Christ's glory. Here we see into the throne room of heaven. God is on the throne and orchestrating all the events that John will record. The world is not spinning out of control; the God of creation will carry out his plans as Christ initiates the final battle with the forces of evil. John shows us heaven before showing us earth so that we will not be frightened by future events.

4:1 The voice John had first heard that sounded like a trumpet blast was the voice of Christ (see [1:10, 11](#)).

4:2 Four times in the book of Revelation John says he was "in the Spirit" ([1:10](#); [4:2](#); [17:3](#); [21:10](#)). This expression means that the Holy Spirit was giving him a vision—showing him situations and events he could not have seen with mere human eyesight. All true prophecy comes from God through the Holy Spirit ([2 Peter 1:20, 21](#)).

4:4 Who are these 24 elders? Because there were 12 tribes of Israel in the Old Testament and 12 apostles in the New Testament, the 24 elders in this vision probably represent all the redeemed of God for all time (both before and after Christ's death and resurrection). They symbolize all those—both Jews and Gentiles—who are now part of God's family. The 24 elders show us that *all* the redeemed of the Lord are worshiping him.

4:5 In Revelation, lightning and thunder are connected with significant events in heaven. They remind us of the lightning and thunder at Mount Sinai when God gave the people his laws ([Exodus 19:16](#)). The Old Testament often uses such imagery to reflect God's power and majesty ([Psalm 77:18](#)).

4:5 The "sevenfold Spirit of God" is another name for the Holy Spirit. See also [Zechariah 4:2-6](#), where seven lamps (like the seven torches here) are equated with the one Spirit.

4:6 Glass was very rare in New Testament times, and crystal-clear glass was virtually impossible to find (see [1 Corinthians 13:12](#)). The "sea of glass" highlights both the magnificence and holiness of God.

4:6, 7 Just as the Holy Spirit is seen symbolically in the seven lighted lamps, so the "four living beings" represent the attributes (the qualities and character) of God. These creatures were not real animals. Like the cherubim (the highest order of the angels), they guard God's throne, lead others in worship, and proclaim God's holiness. God's attributes symbolized in the animal-like appearance of these four creatures are majesty and power (the lion), faithfulness (the ox), intelligence (the human), and sovereignty (the eagle). The Old Testament prophet Ezekiel saw four similar creatures in one of his visions ([Ezekiel 1:5-10](#)).

4:9 John describes these scenes in such detail because Christians in the first century came from many backgrounds. Not all of them understood Jewish history or knew the glory of the Temple. Revelation instructs us in worship. It shows us where, why, and how to praise God. Worship takes our minds off our problems and focuses them on God. Worship leads us from individual meditation to corporate worship. Worship causes us to consider and appreciate God's character. Worship lifts our perspective from the earthly to the heavenly.

4:11 The point of this chapter is summed up in this verse: All creatures in heaven and earth will praise and honor God because he is the creator and sustainer of everything.

Read and Study Revelation 5:1-14. Choose some or all of these questions to answer and discuss:

Open It

1. What kind of books do you like to read? Why?
2. What was the biggest and most electric crowd of which you were ever a part?
3. What foreign language were you first exposed to? When and how?

Explore It

5. What loud proclamation did a mighty angel make? ([5:2](#))
6. Who first came forward to open the scroll? What was John's reaction when the scroll could not be opened? ([5:3-4](#))
7. Who was the only one worthy to open the scroll and its seals? ([5:5](#))
8. For what was the Lamb praised and worshipped? ([5:9-10](#))
9. What were the angels and all the other living creatures doing and singing? ([5:11-13](#))

Get It

10. What did Christ do for us?
11. How can we serve God as His priests?

Apply It

12. How can you worship God in your private times of prayer this week?
13. How can you develop an attitude of praise and thanksgiving to God as you go throughout your day?

Life Application Bible Notes - Rev 5:1-14

Chapter 5

[5:1ff](#) [Chapter 5](#) continues the glimpse into heaven begun in [chapter 4](#).

[5:1](#) In John's day, books were written on scrolls—pieces of papyrus or vellum up to 30 feet long, rolled up and sealed with clay or wax. The scroll that John sees contains the full account of what God has in store for the world. The seven seals indicate the importance of its contents. The seals are located throughout the scroll so that as each one is broken, more of the scroll can be read to reveal another phase of God's plan for the end of the world. Only Christ is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll ([5:3-5](#)).

[5:5](#) The Lion, Jesus, proved himself worthy to break the seals and open the scroll by living a perfect life of obedience to God, dying on the cross for the sins of the world, and rising from the dead to show his power and authority over evil and death. Only Christ conquered sin, death, hell, and Satan himself; so only he can be trusted with the world's future. "Heir to David's throne" refers to Jesus being from David's family line, thus fulfilling the promise of the Messiah in the Old Testament.

5:5, 6 Jesus Christ is pictured as both a Lion (symbolizing his authority and power) and a Lamb (symbolizing his submission to God's will). One of the elders calls John to look at the Lion, but when John looks he sees a Lamb. Christ the Lamb was the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all; therefore, only he can save us from the terrible events revealed by the scroll. Christ the Lamb won the greatest battle of all. He defeated all the forces of evil by dying on the cross. The role of Christ the Lion will be to lead the battle where Satan is finally defeated ([19:19-21](#)). Christ the Lion is victorious because of what Christ the Lamb has already done. We will participate in his victory, not because of our effort or goodness, but because he has promised eternal life to all who believe in him.

5:6 John says the Lamb "had been slaughtered"; the wounds inflicted on Jesus' body during his trial and crucifixion could still be seen (see [John 20:24-31](#)). Jesus was called the Lamb of God by John the Baptist ([John 1:29](#)). In the Old Testament, lambs were sacrificed to atone for sins; the Lamb of God died as the final sacrifice for all sins (see [Isaiah 53:7](#); [Hebrews 10:1-12, 18](#)).

5:6 The horns symbolize strength and power (see [1 Kings 22:11](#); [Zechariah 1:18](#)). Although Christ is a sacrificial lamb, he is in no way weak. He was killed, but now he lives in God's strength and power. In [Zechariah 4:2-10](#), the eyes are equated with the seven lamps and the one Spirit.

5:9, 10 People from every nation are praising God before his throne. God's message of salvation and eternal life is not limited to a specific culture, race, or country. Anyone who comes to God in repentance and faith is accepted by him and will be part of his Kingdom. Don't allow prejudice or bias to keep you from sharing Christ with others. Christ welcomes all people into his Kingdom.

5:9, 10 The song of God's people praises Christ's work. He (1) was killed, (2) ransomed them with his blood, (3) gathered them into a Kingdom, (4) made them priests, and (5) appointed them to reign on the earth. Jesus has already died and paid the penalty for sin. He is now gathering us into his Kingdom and making us priests. In the future we will reign with him. Worship God and praise him for what he has done, what he is doing, and what he will do for all who trust in him. When we realize the glorious future that awaits us, we will find the strength to face our present difficulties.

5:10 The believers' song praises Christ for bringing them into the Kingdom and making them kings and priests. While now we are sometimes despised and mocked for our faith ([John 15:17-27](#)), in the future we will reign over all the earth ([Luke 22:29, 30](#)). Christ's death made all believers priests of God—the channels of blessing between God and people ([1 Peter 2:5-9](#)).

5:11 Angels are spiritual beings created by God who help carry out his work on earth. They bring messages ([Luke 1:26-28](#)), protect God's people ([Daniel 6:22](#)), offer encouragement ([Genesis 16:7ff](#)), give guidance ([Exodus 14:19](#)), bring punishment ([2 Samuel 24:16](#)), patrol the earth ([Ezekiel 1:9-14](#)), and fight the forces of evil ([2 Kings 6:16-18](#); [Revelation 20:1](#)). There are both good and evil angels ([12:7](#)), but because evil angels are allied with Satan, they have considerably less power and authority than good angels. Eventually, the main role of the good angels will be to offer continuous praise to God (see also [19:1-3](#)).