

## A View Above the Clouds

**Revelation 5:1-14** 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. <sup>2</sup> Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" <sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>4</sup> So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>5</sup> 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." <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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, <sup>10</sup> And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." <sup>11</sup> 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, <sup>12</sup> 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!" <sup>13</sup> 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!" <sup>14</sup> Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Kaylee's therapist told me a story the other day. She was doing a cross country ski race. She was exhausted and ready to give up. She stopped at an aid tent.

The person at the aid tent told her, "your still coherent you can keep going."

Our text today also has something to say to those who don't think they can keep going.

Our text reveals to us the Lamb who was slain as He receives the crown to rule. This is the other side of Jesus ascension. This is Jesus' ascension as it is seen from heaven.

All we see is Jesus hidden by the clouds. But there was so much more to it. God reveals to us what was behind the clouds so that we might take heart and be encouraged when we don't think we can keep going.

This vision isn't really for those who are happy and content. It is not really for those for whom everything is going great. If everything is going perfectly in your life, you probably won't get that much out of this vision. But if you are weary, and depressed, and exhausted and just don't know if you can keep going, then this vision is for you, to lift your spirit and strengthen you for the path ahead.

### **The Lamb who was slain is worthy to unroll the scroll**

John weeps when there was no found to unroll the scroll. My wife might weep if there was a book that no one could open but most of us probably wouldn't worry about it too much. Why is John so upset?

The unrolling of the scroll is not just information about the future, it is the unfolding of God's plan. The unrolling of the scroll is the unrolling of God's kingdom in history.

As the scrolls are unrolled the horse come out, the angels come out, the tribulation, the preaching of the gospel. Everything that God has planned is contained in that scroll. As they are unrolled God's kingdom comes, and God's will is done.

If there had been none found to open the scroll, God's plan, God's kingdom would have stopped. It would have ended. The earth would have simply continued growing deeper and deeper in sin. The kingdoms of men would have prevailed.

In the opening of the scrolls the Lamb of God accomplishes God's plan in our lives. His death and resurrection were the first part but now that He is worthy, God's plan can continue.

To those who are unsure or scared about the future, the Lamb who was slain is the one who is unrolling that future. His kingdom is coming.

### **This Lamb has seven horns**

The horns were a sign of strength and power. On the side of the altar in the temple were great big horns symbolizing the power of God.

When Zacharias' son John is born Zacharias proclaims "he has raised up a horn of salvation."

In Psalm 137 the Lord's anointed is called the "horn of David."

The Lamb has not just one horn but seven. The strength to complete the work of God.

In chapter seven of the book of Daniel, the beast has ten horns. Ten horns are better right? Ten horns are stronger than seven. To a human it would seem so but not to God.

Jesus doesn't have any need to walk around with his shirt sleeves torn off to show off his muscles. The kingdoms of this world do all they can to puff themselves up to look bigger and stronger than the Lamb who was slain. They swagger and many are deceived by their swagger and their boasts.

Jesus has seven horns, symbolizing the complete strength of God to accomplish his work. Seven days He created the world and rested. Seven spirits proclaim the word of God to the whole world. The seven lampstands are the light God gives his people. Seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls and at the

seventh the word of God is complete. Seven is the fullness of God's work and therefore also the fullness of his power.

In seven days, God did more than all the kingdoms of the earth could do in ten, and with seven horns the Lamb who was slain has the power to bring the fullness of God's Kingdom.

We often make the mistake of thinking the power of the kingdoms of this world is greater than the church and the Lamb of God, just because they swagger and show off their muscles.

To those who are afraid of the kingdoms and the powers of this world, to those who worry about the might of men, to those who wonder if God's power is forgotten. Jesus is the Lamb with seven horns.

### **This Lamb has seven eyes**

Again, seven but this time seven eyes. These are the eyes that see all that know all. Seven eyes from which nothing is hidden.

In Zec 4:10 they are the eyes of the LORD, "Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

The Lord sees all, yes, the Lord sees our sins and forgives it. But the Lamb also sees our pain and our sorrow and our loneliness. He sees the unfairness of this world. He sees the miscarriage of justice. He sees the quiet service of those who labor but feel as if their labor goes unnoticed.

Today we ought to especially remember you mothers, who labor, and worry and perhaps sometimes feel as if no one notices or appreciates your struggles. The Lamb who was slain, His eyes sees all.

**Psalm 10:14 You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief, To repay it by Your hand. The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless.**

Remember that he is the Lamb who was slain. He was abandoned by His disciples in the garden. He died alone and was forsaken by the Father. He died for us and we act like His sacrifice for our sins meant nothing. Instead, we continue in our sin. He knows what it means to suffer, to be forgotten, to be unfairly treated. He sees your suffering.

To those who suffer and think that no one understands, and no one notices, the Lamb of God sees.

He too suffered and is now sitting on the right hand of the glory of God. By his blood you too will be redeemed from this earth and live with him.

### **They sand a new song**

I was running a race recently. When I got to about mile nine there was a man dressed in a Scottish kilt playing Amazing Grace on the bag pipes. That was quite encouraging.

The twenty-four elders sing a new song to the Lamb. Throughout scripture the new song of God's people is the song of the Lamb who died. In Rev 15 the people of God are in the midst of a fierce battle with the dragon, but they do not come with swords. They come with harps singing this same new song of the Lamb. It is the new song of the Lamb, the singing of the Gospel, which vanquishes Satan.

**Hymn 463 reminds us**

**But when the fight is fierce, the warfare long,  
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,  
and hearts are brave again and arms are strong.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

For those who are weary comes the new song of the Lamb who died for sinners like us. Be it *Amazing Grace*, or *I Know That My Redeemer Lives*, or *Chief Of Sinners Though I Be*, it is all the same song.

The song of the Lamb who died and rose again, who is victorious. The song of the Lamb who won freedom and forgiveness even for sinners like us.

Yes this earth is a weary place filled with injustice and sorrow and sin, but here we have a view of the finish line. The Lamb who was slain is worthy and is in control. His strength is active in your life and His eyes see all your suffering. To those who are weary know that the Lamb sees your suffering and will bring you to the end. Amen