

The Lion Who Is a Lamb

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

Do you ever ask yourself the question, "What's happening to this world?" Things are rapidly deteriorating into utter chaos. So little makes sense today. Violence escalates and reason has taken its leave. Madness casts long shadows over the prospect of peace and goodwill.

Radical Islam marches forward with ruthless savagery. The Russian bear rises up again hungry for new lands, widening its territory with the sword. Recently China and Russia performed joint military drills within 12 miles of our Alaska. North and South Korea exchanged hostilities lately pushing to the edge of all out conflict. The United States makes treaties with people who promise to destroy us, while we insult long-standing friends. Hundreds of thousands have migrated away from their homelands hoping against hope for a little more hope than they had in the homeland.

Here at home we spend money that we don't have and we have indebted every man, woman, and child to the tune of \$56,493.05. That's what's tied around the neck of every newborn; great way to get started in life! Teach them early how to spend more than they take in. Racial tensions accelerate and violence breaks out in every corner, "from California to the New York island; from the red wood forest to the Gulf Stream waters," violence at every hand. Policemen are made out to be the bad guys and thugs are treated like heroes. We've devalued life to the point that we have to be told which lives matter, while life in the womb doesn't matter.

Judicial tyranny has taken over this nation. Men and women in black robes in federal courts can invent law and enforce it at whim. They reinvent the definition of marriage and other laws created by the uncreated Judge of the universe, believing there is no higher court than theirs. We jail Christians for their conscientious objection and allow Muslim officials to refuse to obey laws that offend them.

And so we ask not expecting an answer, "What's going on?"

The answer is God's great redemptive and judicatory plan. Every thing is going according to the providence of the all-knowing and all wise God, who warned man that if he disobeyed the payment would be more than he was willing to pay. And so we are experiencing the payment and it will only get worse. But do not judge me a pessimist. Oh no, to the contrary. It may get worse before it gets better, but it will get better. That's the plan and it's God's plan.

The scene is the throne of God. You have God on His throne and the holy entourage that separates God from all of His creation. In the midst of this glorious scene, John's eye pinpoints one small detail.

I. The Scroll

"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." (Revelation 5:1)

A scroll is a book. Bookbinding as we have today had been invented by the time of John but very rare and very expensive. Even the cost of papyrus scrolls was expensive, making most poor people unable to afford them.

A. The Construction of a Scroll.

Generally a scroll was made out of papyrus, some out of animal skins, but mainly scrolls were made out papyrus grown in the delta marshes of Egypt. Papyrus is like celery—very stringy—and so, to make papyrus paper they would string the papyrus one string at a time and dry it out. They would lay it horizontally and then they would come over with another layer vertically and glue those two layers back to back. Then they would write on the one side that had the horizontal grain of the papyrus.

Interesting enough, this scroll in John's vision had writing on both sides. Most scrolls had writing on the inside only. Seldom were scrolls written on both sides. When would you write on both sides? Remember, one side of the Papyrus is going horizontal, with the grain, the other is going vertical, which would be very difficult to write on. Why would you do that? You would if you were poor and this is all the papyrus you had.

But the other reason you would do so is if you had an official legal document and you did not want to split the document. You wouldn't want part of a legal document to end up missing because it was in the second scroll, so you would write on the backside. Hence, John is giving us a clue that this document must be very official and very important because it's written on the inside and the outside. God is not poor so that's not the reason He's doing it. No, it's to state in this symbolic language that this document is important, if not the most important of all documents ever issued by pen or quill.

B. The Purpose of This Scroll.

What is the significance? It is symbolic of the full counsel of God in redemption and judgment, in His salvation of the saints and the judgment of His enemies. All of that is wrapped up in this one scroll. And it was in God's right hand—the hand of power.

Then John shows us there were also seven seals.

C. The Seals.

What would keep the scroll closed? The most common way was to get you a piece of string and simply tie it. But not a legal or important document. Not documents of state, not documents from very important people; no, for those you used wax seals. And the more important you were, the more seals you used. This scroll had seven seals, which is the number of perfection and completion. The person who issued *this* scroll is very important, perfect in all of His ways.

It was very important, so a voice comes. We'll look at the voice and the challenges in just a moment, but it's important that the seals be broken and this document read. The breaking the seals meant the enactment of the document. Breaking the seals puts the document into action. This plan cannot enter into force without the seals being broken and the scroll read.

That's the question in verse two, that's the challenge. It's much like a will and testament. The will is no good until the person dies, then the death puts that document into action, into force. Without the breaking of the seals, nothing can happen that's written both inside and outside.

II. The Challenge

Revelation 5:2-4

A. The Challenge Presented.

Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” (Revelation 5:2)

Who is able to execute and bring to pass the purpose of God concerning salvation and judgment? Who is able to do this? Who is mighty enough? Who is worthy enough?

This goes back to chapter four, which we will not take the time to read, but let me just catch you up to speed. In the fourth chapter you have the throne room of God and the vision of God with the sentries who stand at attention around the throne room. The whole fourth chapter of Revelation is to tell you that God is holy and unapproachable.

If you were to be summoned to the White House or if you were just taking a tour of the White House, you would have to go through multiple checkpoints. You would have to go through several layers of security and the closer you got to the Oval Office, to the President, the more security checkpoints you must go through. Why? The President of the United States is a very important person, very important to our society and government. If you come and visit the pastor at his house, you won't have to go through any security or any levels of clearance, you can just come on in—you don't even have to knock, just please announce your presence. Why no security checks at my house? Because I'm not that important.

In the throne room of God, you begin with the first level of security—24 elders around the throne. Then after the 24 elders you have to cross the glassy sea. To a Jew, to whom most of these letters were written, that was code for impassability. Jews were not seamen. They took a stab at it during the administration of Solomon and it didn't last long, so they decided they would hire their mariners from that moment on. For them, the sea was too treacherous, too hard to navigate, and they didn't know enough about it. So when John sees in his vision this glassy sea, though it's calm and tranquil, it's still frightening. It still says “impassible.” And once you go through that you have to go through thunder and lightning, and pass the seven Spirits of God and finally, the last level, the four living creatures.

Might I say, I would not want to go home and try to draw these four creatures. One has the face of a man, one looks like an eagle, one looks like a lion, another like a calf, these four are the nearest to the throne of God, but even they are not right there, there is still some distance between them and God. What does that mean? No one can approach the throne of God. It's too holy.

B. John's Response to the Unaccepted Challenge.

“And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.” (Revelation 5:3-4)

John does not weep because his curiosity is not being satisfied. John understands that unless someone is worthy to approach God and take the scroll and open it, then God's purposes of salvation and judgment cannot happen.

Remember, in the book of Revelation, John represents the persecuted church. The church was being persecuted and he himself was an exile of the Roman Empire on a small island of Patmos as a prisoner of Rome. This is the time of Domitian, one of the most vicious dictators that had an animosity toward Christians that could not be satisfied. He was more ruthless than Nero, who 30 years earlier during his insane reign, killed Christians including Paul and Peter. This was a time of great persecution and upheaval. This was a time when people asked, "What is going on?" So God responds in mercy, giving John this vision so that he might write it down and send it to the seven churches listed in Revelation 2-3.

John represents a persecuted people. He knows unless the scroll is opened all is in vain and lost. You see, to some people's objection, the last days had already started. If you were one of those who grew up, like me, being a pre-tribulational dispensationalist, you would disagree with that statement, as I was taught to disagree with it. But over the years I have come to see that isn't true. The last days are not some seven-year tribulational period that people will enter into after the church has been raptured. Rather, the Bible is very clear that the last days started with the first coming of Jesus and with His death and ascension. Jesus acknowledges that several times and the apostles say it over and over that they were already in the last days.

That does not mean the last days are not going to get worse, they are. You cannot read the book of Revelation and not know that the last days has an end time where the severity can and will increase. There will be a man of lawlessness known as the Antichrist and he will have wrath toward the people of God and the Jewish people. But dear friends, we are in the last days already. If you could ask anyone from those seven churches of Revelation if they were undergoing great persecution and if the last days had begun, as far as they were concerned, the answer was yes. To be a Christian was almost automatically a death sentence. We talk about tribulation, but it's nothing compared to the tribulation of these early days. It can't get any worse than when you profess faith in Jesus Christ and are baptized it's not long until you're given to the sword or to wild beasts or to the gladiators of Rome.

Men were burned alive at the stake. Women and children were torn apart by horses and wild beasts. Do you know what it means to be quartered? It means to have all of your appendages tied to horses and then those horses driven in opposite direction tearing your body apart. You are literally pulled apart. This was done at the local gymnasium as entertainment. It was the equivalent of our concerts today. This is what they did for theater and amusement. If you lived back then, you would have thought the great tribulation had begun. It had. And it has gone through the ages and as we go through the remainder of this book of Revelation you will see this is a recurring theme that these things are going to happen throughout the ages of the church.

Did you know that in the 20th Century, the century we came out of 16 years ago, that in that 100 year period more people were martyred for Jesus Christ than the previous 19 centuries, including the days of John? There have been martyrdom and persecution of God's people throughout the ages and the problem with the American saint is that we've never had to go through persecution. Now that we're on the threshold of it, we're beside ourselves wondering what is going on. All you have to do is look at this Book and you'll find out what's going on. All you have to do is look at brothers and sisters in other places in the world and let them educate us.

We may be able to give them theology and the finer points of hermeneutics but they can give us the lessons of how to suffer and endure faithfully because they've been doing it for a long time. This is not new. John knows that if this scroll is not opened that Jesus and what His death had purchased could not become reality.

III. The Challenge Accepted

vs. 5-7

A. The Announcement of the Lion.

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 5:5)

The Lion of the tribe of Judah is none other than our Jesus. He was prophesied to be so. Go back all the way to Jacob, lying on his deathbed and giving his 12 sons and Joseph's two sons their blessing.

"Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people." Genesis 49:9, 10.

In other words, it was prophesied that the government and kingship of the people would come through the tribe of Judah. The scepter is a symbol of kingly authority and we know of which tribe David was from. The tribe of Judah. And the Lord promised David a royal dynasty from which would come One sitting on his throne over Israel all the days.

He's not just called the Lion of Judah but also the root of Jesse. This is very important. This tells us the line of David and his kingly sons and the right to the throne had been cut off.

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

When the Babylonians took of Jerusalem and destroyed Israel, they cut off David's dynasty from ruling over Israel. From that moment on they installed governors and when the kingship of Israel

was restored it was given to another, not to a rightful heir of David. So when Jesus was born it is Herod that sits on the throne of Israel, not one from the tribe of Judah and not one of David's descendants. Isaiah prophesied that there is going to come a root from Jesse and a branch will grow out of its roots. The tree of David will be cut down but out of the roots there shall come forth a stem, a sucker, and that will be the one who will ascend to the throne of David. Here He is—our King Jesus.

But then in verse six we don't see a lion.

B. The Sighting of a Lamb.

“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 5:6)

In verse five we see a lion and in verse six we see a lamb. These are not two animals representing two different persons. What is going on here? John, in apocalyptic fashion, mixes his metaphors. A metaphor is a symbol representing something else and here John mixes them. You have a lion and a lamb representing the same person.

This lamb appears to have been slain and it has seven horns and seven eyes. Again, the number seven is perfection or complete. The horn is regularly a symbol of power and authority. The Lamb has complete kingly right to rule.

Seven eyes represent the fact that He sees all things perfectly, which would mean perfect knowledge. Here's the Lamb, here's the one who will take the scroll having all authority and all knowledge and He takes the scroll.

C. The Taking of the Scroll.

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

Note where the Lamb is—somehow He's passed all the levels of security. There He is in the midst of the throne. Only God could be standing in this position. This is God! This is the God who became flesh and came to us and has now ascended back to the right hand of His Father.

The only one who could bring about the purposes of God is one who comes from God and is God. Only He can open the seals, but not without His sacrificial death. It is not the kingly power conquering enemies that makes redemption and judgment possible. Rather it is the Lamb offered up as the sacrifice that takes away the sin of the world. My sin. There He is having completed the sacrifice, He is now worthy to begin the redemptive enterprise and to deal out judgment to His enemies as He wills. At that, heaven breaks out in celebration.

IV. The New Song

vs. 8-14

A. The Worship of the Four Creatures and Elders.

“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.” (Revelation 5:8)

Before this in chapter four they worshiped He who sat on the throne. Now they worship the Lamb.

Each have a harp, holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

In the first century a harp was an instrument of joy. I think it's kind of like a banjo today, sorry to make that crude comparison. But have you ever heard a banjo play a dirge, a sorrowful song? You can't do that. You can't make a banjo play a sad sound, it's a happy sound, whether you like the banjo or not. It just makes you tap your foot and smile real big. A harp was an instrument of joy. Remember the psalmist during the Babylonian captivity talking about the harp in Psalm 137?

“By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept When we remembered Zion. 2 We hung our harps Upon the willows in the midst of it. 3 For there those who carried us away captive asked of us a song, And those who plundered us requested mirth, Saying, ‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion!’ 4 How shall we sing the LORD’S song In a foreign land?” (Psalms 137:1-4)

It wasn't a time of joy so they hung up their harps. Each one of these creatures has a joyful, melodious instrument.

Then they have bowls of incense—prayers are like incense to God. It is wonderful to Him. They're beautiful to Him. If you're having difficulty praying, just remember it's incense to God. Your prayers are like a scented candle in your home or a beautiful perfume, your prayers rise to God as an aroma that is uplifting and delightful.

Here is the point—If Christ had not died, then our prayers could not have been answered. That's the point. This is the point for the bowls to now be offered—the Lamb has been slain, you can go boldly to the throne of God, a throne of grace! The way has been made. Access has been granted. The Lamb has paid the price. The sin question has been answered and you are no longer called “guilty.” This is the basis of why God can now answer your prayers. Not only can you now come but you can come expectantly. Instead of God giving us His wrath, He invites us to come and He will even give us our heart's desires.

They are celebrating redemption.

B. The Singing.

vs. 9-10

There are two songs. The first one is new in that it is different from the song in chapter 4:11. In chapter four God is being praised for being Creator. This song is new because of the sacrifice of the Lamb. It's a song of redemption. Here the praise is for redemption. Think about what would happen if Christ had not died. I don't know if I want to, do you? It might do us well.

What would happen if He had not died? You and I would still be under the judgment and wrath of God. God would be our sworn enemy and there would be no hope of ever being reconciled to Him. We could not think of any prayer being answered, we wouldn't even dare utter that prayer. To do so would be vile blasphemy.

But it's a bloody hymn. Look at verse nine.

“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 . . .”

There are a lot of people who are skeptical of all of our hymns that mention the blood of Jesus. I don't know why they're skeptical of bloody hymns. The blood makes us white as snow.

No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Let's rejoice in the blood. Let's not be ashamed of that precious flow. “Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.” How?! By the blood! The marks that stand against you can only be removed by the blood of Jesus.

It's a bloody hymn but it's also a multi-ethnic hymn.

“Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,”

Thank God. Talk about the rainbow coalition. Here it is. All of the colors of the rainbow are here. None are missing. Every tribe is represented. Not just every tribe but every dialect from every tribe and nation. The cross marches on—the kingdom is advancing—we're not losing. Wake up, folks! Put away your sorrow and forlorn faces you should be happy today, the kingdom of God knows no retreat. Our King moves forward into places where the Gospel has not been named and people are coming to saving faith in Jesus as they bow their knee to Him as King and Lord. This is happening!

We are living in one of the most exciting days of missions and evangelism. My only grief is that I'm not more involved. I want to be more involved in this redemptive plan of God found in the

scroll. I wonder if my name and your name are there? I wonder if the scroll is that complete and detailed that even your life as an ambassador of the kingdom of God is mentioned. I wonder if your life is written there with what your life was like and what you will have done for the kingdom before you leave this place.

It's also a triumphant hymn. We see this in verse 10.

“And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”

If you know anything about Old Testament Bible, know there is a contradiction between kings and priests. Kings and priests were two different offices and the two never were to be mixed. What happened to Saul when he offered the sacrifice, not waiting for Samuel the priest? God took away his kingdom. What happened to Uzziah when he ran into the temple, grabbed the golden incense of the high priest and went to offer it? He was immediately struck with leprosy. The king could not be the priest and the priest could not be the king.

What does it say here, though? We're a people who are both kings and priests. Royalty and priesthood have been joined together. You are a royal priesthood. Why? Because the Lamb was slain! I'm talking to people who have the authority of heaven in them and for them, who can offer up the incense of God's praise without fear of judgment.

C. Angelic Choir.

“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, 12 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!” 13 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!” 14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.” (Revelation 5:11-14)

As I bring this message to some kind of conclusion, I want to go back to the lamb and the lion. Which is He? Is this a lamb like lion or a lion like lamb? Is He a part-time lion and a part-time lamb? Does He take off one hat and put on the other? Is this a lamb-like lion or a lion-like lamb?

He is both. It takes both metaphors to accurately portray who He is and what He has done. He is a being of utmost power and strength and a being of utmost sacrifice.

However, even though Jesus is described as a lion it is His humility, even in His wrath, that is the emphasis here. This ought to capture our hearts. If we love Jesus, this ought to move us to worship. In the Revelation, Jesus is represented as a lion only this one time, whereas He is represented as a lamb 28 times. That doesn't mean He is a lion-like lamb, no, He is a lion and He is a lamb.

He is a lion because He has defeated all His enemies. He is a lion because He is king. Yet He is a lamb because He was slain without resistance. He is lamb because He was a sacrifice for sin. He entered Jerusalem at the beginning of Passion Week as the Lion of Judah but He went out of Jerusalem at the end of the week as a lamb to the slaughter. He cleansed the Temple like a lion making the moneychangers and sellers run away in fear. But He voluntarily laid down His life like a lamb on Calvary's altar. It was not in His ferociousness as a lion that He triumphed over sin, Satan, and death but as a lamb that was slain. It is this kingly humility that John sees magnified in heaven's throne room. Kingly humility. It was this that destroyed Satan.

Satan was ready for mortal combat but Jesus threw off his game. He confused the devil when Jesus didn't answer His critics. Like a lamb, dumb before His shearers, He went to the cross.

Jonathan Edwards depicts the paradox of one who wins by losing with another familiar comparison.

The devil had, as it were, swallowed up Christ, as the whale did Jonah; but it was deadly poison to him; he gave him a mortal wound in his own bowels. He was soon sick of his morsel, and was forced to do by him as the whale did by Jonah. To this day he is heart-sick of what he then swallowed as his prey. (Works, vol. I, p. 685)

Here is the King of the universe, surrounded by all these beings, beings so much stronger and more powerful than us and they wouldn't even dare to look upon Him. They won't even dare get near the throne. Yet He's so humble that a child could get up into His lap and play. He is so ferocious and terrifying that when we get to the sixth chapter they will literally cry out for the rocks to bury them from the face of the Lamb that sits on the throne. Yet He's as gentle as a summer breeze, not sufficient to blow a leaf out of a tree. He's so gentle.

Remember the way He treated you when He found you. I remember when all of my accusers desired to ostracize and reject me, taking my sins and wanting to hang them around my neck as a label and pronounce me unclean, but when Jesus came to me He didn't ostracize me. He received me. I remember one enemy far greater than anyone who had opposed me. It was my own condemnation. I hated me. I wept for days and days over my sins, thinking I was so buried deep within them there would be no hope to see the light of day. I felt that I was dead in the grave already. I felt myself broken over the rocks, washed up. But Jesus came to me only in tenderness. There was not one word of accusation, not one word of condemnation, not a complaint at all. Tenderly He found me and lifted me up.

In lovingkindness Jesus came
My soul in mercy to reclaim,
And from the depths of sin and shame
Through grace He lifted me.

His brow was pierced with many a thorn,
His hands by cruel nails were torn,

When from my guilt and grief, forlorn,
In love He lifted me.

*From sinking sand He lifted me,
With tender hand He lifted me,
From shades of night to plains of light,
O praise His name, He lifted me!*

Tender as a lamb. I'm not talking about a full-grown sheep with its massive horns, I'm talking about a lamb, defenseless and helpless as any animal could be, yet He is the Lion of Judah.

He's including you and me in His redemptive plan and as the scroll unfolds there maybe tribulation and difficulty for us. We could enter worse days than we've ever seen before. We may have to go through a period where we wonder if we shall live or die but be encouraged—as John would write to people asking the same questions, he gave them one hope, a lion who was a lamb who was slain. That is our hope today. Our hope is that He has the strength to raise us up from every enemy and foe but at the same time, if He chooses not to do so, He is able to whisper His love into our ears and sustain us gently, tenderly and kindly. He is enough.

Because He is enough, you have all you need. No matter the day, the trial, or the tribulation. Thank God for the Lion of Judah who, as a Lamb, was slain for us. Let us lift up our voices and sing, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. Amen."