# Thy Kingdom Come on Earth as it is in Heaven-- Revelation 5

# Pastor Emeritus Joe Fuiten, December 1, 2019

Every third and fourth Wednesday night of the month I have been out in the Chapel of the Resurrection teaching through the book of Revelation. It is an awesome book describing awesome events which culminate in *"The kingdom of the world … becoming the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever*." Rev 11:15

As it turns out, people are pretty rebellious and become increasingly so as the last days draw near. We are in the last days of this world right now. The growing intensity you feel and see everywhere is just the beginning. It will get even more intense with every passing moment and the rebellion against God will enter its last, dying, thrashing episodes. This will show up economically, politically, socially, scientifically, religiously, sexually, culturally, and every other way that humans and demons can express their rebellion against God. God is only going to put up with that for so long and the book of Revelation shows elements of the rebellion and the actions of God to put down the rebellion. Only this time he will finally put the rebellion in the same hell from which it originated. All of this is revealed in the chapters beyond chapter 5 where I am today.

Up to this point there have been messages to the seven churches of Revelation. Chapters 4 and 5 are not about the events on the earth but about what is going on in heaven. The door of heaven is left open and John looks inside and records what he sees. I have wondered why these two chapters are placed where they are, after the letters to the churches and before the rebellion being put down. The idea I would like to propose to you is that chapters 4 and five are a kind of preview, prototype, or revelation of the kingdom as it exists in heaven so we know what the kingdom is going to look like on the earth. It describes normative behavior, the ways things are meant to be and will be. It defines normal.+

When Jesus taught us to pray he said pray like this: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is IN HEAVEN.” Heaven is the prototype for what should happen on the earth. When God set up his program at Sinai (Ex 19:6) he said “*you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*.” The Tabernacle with its elements and worship was to mirror what was IN HEAVEN. When Jesus died on the cross he gave a whole new revelation about the tabernacle and ministry. Hebrews 9:11-12 “*When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. 12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”*  He was showing that the earthly worship given at Sinai was to prepare us for what is in heaven. What Jesus did on the cross expanded the program to include Gentiles which Peter described in 1 Peter 2:9-10 using the language of Sinai. *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”*  A new holy kingdom was established which Jesus, as his last assignment, revealed in Matthew 28:19-20 ‘*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”*

From the beginning God intended an earthly kingdom that would mirror the heavenly kingdom and he intended us to be active participants in it all the way.

When we left chapter 4, the Apostle John was looking into heaven through the open door seeing three key elements of God’s program. God rules in heaven and on earth represented by his throne. Heavenly worship is the model for earthly worship. God’s angels surround God’s presence in heaven just as they surround those that belong to him on this earth. In each case what is seen in heaven has implications for what will soon be fully realized on the earth.

The text itself is majestic in Revelation 5:  *Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" 3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. 4 I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. 5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." 6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. 8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song: "****You are worthy*** *to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain,* *and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be* ***a kingdom*** *and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." 11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang:* ***"Worthy is the Lamb****, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.”*

 What we just read I think is there to let us know what is normative. Let’s highlight a couple of the ideas.

First, **Jesus is worthy**. John the Baptist said “*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world*.” Here John sees that Lamb of God, looking as if he had been slain. He sees the wounds in his hands, feet, side, and head. We are meant to make the connection with the cross and Jesus being slain there. We are sinners. One sinner can’t do much for another sinner. It takes the Lamb of God to take away the sin. Because he is worthy he can do it. He is also worthy because he did it.

But Jesus is not only the **Lamb** of God. He is also “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,* who *has triumphed.”* The triumph of the lion was his sacrifice as a lamb. It was his worthiness on the cross that made him able to purchase us for God. He paid the price and we were purchased.

 The **Lion of the Tribe of Judah** also refers all the way back to Genesis 49:9-10 when Jacob blessed his sons. He told Judah that rulership and authority would remain in his line until the end time. Calling Jesus the Lion of Judah reminds us that he is a ruler who will soon take his authority in the earth. “*You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness-- who dares to rouse him? 10 The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until* ***he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his****.”*

The ever widening circle of praise to God is a circle we want to join. In the scene, we make our entrance through the golden bowls of incense which are the prayers of the saints. In our prayers today we filled the golden bowls of heaven. *"****You are worthy*** *… because you were slain,* *and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."*

 **Prayer** is our entry point into this cosmic celebration and our contribution to it. Learn to love prayer. It is your ticket to the greatest show in heaven and on earth. We are purchased by the blood of Jesus and we participate by prayer. We celebrate ethnicity and language because they are the mosaic of God’s grand glory. We praise Jesus for his kingdom and its rule. We rejoice that we can serve as a priest unto God. We read this and we understand God’s kingdom and acquire content for our prayers.

 We are not just those who provide the prayers. Our main **identity** is that we were “purchased for God.” *9 And they sang a new song: "****You are worthy*** *to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain,* *and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be* ***a kingdom*** *and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."*

 There is an earthly kingdom and an earthly priesthood which is our destiny. Not everyone shares that vision. Some are merely uninformed and can be brought into the kingdom in the days ahead. Others are malicious opponents of Jesus and will fight the kingdom of God to their bitter end. Beneath virtually every controversy and dispute there is a spiritual dynamic. Your ethnicity, nationality, and culture are the least important things about you. You were purchased from there to be a priest unto God and to serve in his kingdom. The most important thing about an orca or a salmon is that they will join with porcupines, squids, and seagulls in singing: *"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"*

 Into this world of rebellion God is sending rays of light. Jacob Hollister, the new tight end for the Seahawks says he begins game day by spending time with worship music…..”*To him who sits on the throne*…..” Kim Kardashian says she is now dressing conservatively because her husband is a new Christian and she has four kids to raise. For his part, Kanye West, entrepreneur and hip hop artist, has the most listened to album in America and it declares “Jesus is King” and advocates for the nation obeying what Jesus commanded. These are a handful of “normal” that God is giving to a world where Bruce Jenner becomes Caitlyn Jenner, the step father who becomes female, to Kim Kardashian.

 At its core, there is a malicious perversion and rebellion against God. God is still giving examples of what is right and true. He gives it in his Word here in Revelation 5 and he gives in the form of you and me. We are to live what is true and to preach what is true. God alone is worthy of praise. God alone is true. God’s truth and reality now exists in heaven. It is on the earth in outposts of holiness and righteousness which is what his church is. Soon, and very soon, we shall see the king and his kingdom will come on the earth as it is in heaven.

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