

“When All Heaven Breaks Loose!” (Revelation 5:1-14)

How many of you remember your first kiss? (Now teenagers, of course, you have your first kiss to look forward to): If you’ve had a first kiss, you know how difficult it is to explain. You can check the dictionary definition: “A caress with the lips; a gentle touch or contact.” But does that really capture the essence of what a kiss is? Does that describe what a mother does when she tenderly places her lips on the forehead of her newborn child? Is that what a husband does when he expresses his love to his wife? Trying to explain God is like trying to explain a kiss. Just as words cannot completely capture all that is involved in what we know by experience and attempt to describe as a “kiss,” we also cannot fully comprehend, explain, or define “God.” We can, however, know Him through experiencing His revelation of Himself to us in His Word and in the person of Jesus Christ.¹

We are studying the book of Revelation. Today we are in Revelation 5:1-14. In both chapters 4 and 5, the scene is in heaven. In chapter 4 we experienced the worship of God the Father. In chapter 5 we will experience the worship of Jesus Christ. These two chapters provide us a keyhole glimpse of what will be going on in heaven before God pours out His judgments on the earth (Rev 6-18).

1. God is in complete control of the future (5:1-4). John records, “I saw² in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up³ with seven seals.” Chapter 4 began by focusing our attention upon a throne; chapter 5 begins by drawing our attention to a scroll. In God the Father’s right hand John saw a book (lit. a “scroll”).⁴ What more profound way of picturing God’s ultimate sovereignty over all history could be found than this picture of the scroll resting in His hand?⁵ However strong evil becomes, however fierce be the satanic evils that assail God’s people on earth, history still rests in God’s hand.

God’s “right hand” refers to His authority to translate the contents of this scroll into action. This scroll is the focus of John’s attention in this chapter, and it is what Jesus Christ opens in chapter 6, resulting in the judgments that will come upon the earth. The scroll contains the detailed plans and purposes of God for subduing the enemies of Christ and establishing His reign upon the earth.⁶ This scroll is so full of words that John could see writing on the inside as well as the outside of the scroll (cf. Ezek 2:10).⁷ Writing on both sides indicates the detailed and important nature of the judgments. It also emphasizes their ability to accomplish the purposes of God. Someone, probably God, had sealed it with seven seals, suggesting the profound nature of the revelation it contained. It may represent the book of prophecies God instructed Daniel to seal until the end times (Dan 12:4, 9). The perfect number of seals (“seven”) may also hint at the absolute sacredness of the scroll. The seals inform us that while this plan has been settled in the eternal counsels of God, it has been concealed and only one, who is duly authorized, may open it to read and execute it. The period of grace and God’s long-suffering has now come to an end.

John is mesmerized by God the Father and the scroll in His right hand, when he sees a “strong angel⁸ proclaiming with a loud voice,⁹ ‘Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?’ And¹⁰ no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it” (5:2-3). This unnamed, strong angel asks the question of the ages: “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?” One with sufficient authority and worthiness was necessary to open the scroll and by breaking its seals to unleash the judgments on the world that it contained. Any prophet could have revealed this information but it took someone with adequate power to execute the events foretold, as well as to reveal and bring them to pass. This strong angel goes on a universal search and discovers that no angel, no created being (cf. Phil 2:10), no human being, no creature, no spirit, and no one can open the scroll.

This futile search almost crushed John's heart! He dissolved emotionally. The future of the world seemed too bleak to face.¹¹ So in 5:4, John acknowledges, **"Then I began to weep greatly¹² because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it."** John's continual weeping reflected his sorrow that God's future kingdom and final judgment appear to be indefinitely postponed because no one had sufficient authority to open the scroll.¹³ Did this mean that the wrongs of earth would not be dealt with? Does this mean that the righteous will never be vindicated and that the wicked will go unpunished? John understood that if God's purposes fail, then all of life is meaningless. If no one can open the scroll, none of God's purposes will come to pass. The sad truth is: without Christ there will be only weeping.

2. Jesus Christ will carry out God's final purposes on earth (5:5-7). Yet, suddenly in 5:5, one of the elders said to John, **"Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."** One of the 24 elders comforted John with the news that Jesus Christ would open the scroll (cf. Luke 7:13; 8:52). He had achieved victory over all God's enemies and therefore had the authority to open the scroll and to release its contents. The **"Lion that is from the tribe of Judah"** and the **"Root of David"** are Old Testament titles of the Messiah who would fulfill the promises of salvation and would rule.¹⁴ The tribe of Judah was the tribe of David from which the kingly line proceeded (Gen 49:9-10). It was this tribe that the promise was given of a Son whose throne and kingdom would endure forever (2 Sam 7:13, 16). The title "the Root of David" means the Messiah would come through the lineage of David as a greater son of David (Luke 1:32-33).¹⁵ He who came after David as the offspring of David was also before him as the root (Rev 22:16). As God's ultimate Anointed One, Jesus alone possessed the authority necessary for this task. He overcame Satan, sin, and death so He could implement God's purposes for the future that this scroll revealed. Only Christ can carry out God's final purposes on earth.

Eagerly, John turns his head to see this Lion-King. But the apostle is not prepared for what he sees. Expecting to see a kingly Lion, the apostle sees something totally different: John saw **"between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb¹⁶ standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth" (5:6).** Notice four things in 5:6.

First, John sees the Messiah as a **"Lamb."**¹⁷ The "Lamb"¹⁸ is a symbol of Jesus Christ at His first advent, meek and submissive to a sacrificial death as our substitute (Isa 53:7; John 1:36; 21:15).¹⁹ The Lion is a symbol of Jesus at His second coming, powerful and aggressively judging the world in righteousness (Ps 2).²⁰ John saw the Lamb, now in the center of all the creatures and elders gathered around the throne, as the central character and most important personage in the entire heavenly scene (cf. Rev 3:21; 4:6; 7:17).²¹

Second, the Lamb had been slain. The word **"slain"**²² means to cut up and mutilate an animal sacrifice. It speaks of a violent, bloody sacrifice. It describes the gory crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thorns pierced His skull. A whip lacerated His back. Fists bruised His face. Nails gouged His hands. A spear tore His side. Blood and water came gushing out.²³ Christ paid the ultimate price for mankind.

Third, the Lamb is **"standing."** This slain Lamb, who was violently slaughtered and put to death, is now actually standing! Having been killed, He is alive again, and He is standing in the innermost circle next to the throne.

Fourth, the Lamb is awesome with His seven horns and seven eyes. The number seven represents the fullness of Christ's power in defeating His foes. The horn is a biblical symbol for power and authority.²⁴

The seven eyes represent the fullness of Christ's divine wisdom and discernment (Zech 4:10). His eyes are the seven Spirits of God (i.e., the seven manifestations of the Spirit) that communicate to Christ all that transpires (Isa 11:2-4).²⁵ The Lamb is all-knowing as well as all-powerful. This is one Lamb who can't have the wool pulled over His eyes! There is no more dreadful thought than to have to face the "Lion" in judgment because you have rejected the "Lamb." The purpose of the Lord's first coming was gracious. He came to "seek and to save those who are lost" (Luke 19:10). But the purpose of His second coming is different. Then He comes to deal with His enemies and to fulfill His promises of blessing to His own. Do not reject the grace of God, my friend. There comes a time when all men must deal with the "Lion," either as the One for whom we have watched and worked and prayed or the One whom we have rejected.

Now in one dramatic moment, Jesus Christ, the Lion-Lamb, boldly approaches the throne of God. In 5:7, Jesus exercises His sovereignty²⁶ by coming and taking the scroll out of the Father's right hand. This symbolizes a transfer of authority from the Father to the Son to reveal the future and to execute judgment.

What we have in Revelation 5 is a vision of Christ (5:1-7) and the expanding, concentric circles of His worship in heaven. First, we see the worship of Jesus Christ in heaven by those immediately around the throne (5:8-10); then we see worship throughout all heaven (5:11-12); finally, we see worship throughout the entire universe (5:13-14). Like a "wave" at a football game, it spreads to all creation.²⁷

3. Jesus Christ is worthy of overwhelming praise (5:8-14). In 5:8, John writes, **"When He [Jesus] had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."** This transfer resulted in an outpouring of praise for the Lamb because it signaled that Christ would begin judging (Rev 6-18). While the four living creatures and 24 elders prostrated themselves in worship, only the elders had harps and bowls.²⁸ They used the harps to praise God in song (Ps 33:2; 98:5).²⁹ Throughout the Bible, the harp is an instrument of joy and gladness. In fact, the harp is used in Scripture more than any other instrument to praise God (Ps 71:22). All types of instruments will be used in heaven to worship God. Here on earth, we must do the same (Ps 150:3-6).

John explained that the bowls contained the prayers of God's people that are as the fragrant aroma of burning incense to Him (cf. Ps 141:2; Luke 1:10). In the Old Testament the offering of incense was a priestly duty (Num 16:6-7) so these angels were functioning in a priestly capacity.³⁰ The prayers offered are probably all those unanswered petitions that people have prayed asking God to judge unrighteousness, including, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (cf. 5:10; 6:10; 8:3-5; Matt 6:10; Luke 18:7-8).³¹ These prayers are the pleadings of saints already in heaven, requesting God to make right every wrong on the earth. These prayers are petitions offered to God to vindicate His name on the earth by pouring out His judgments upon an unbelieving world. Remember, saints in heaven are glorified—they are perfected in the image of Christ. We will be without any sin. Therefore, these prayers are perfect petitions offered by perfected people in a perfect place.³²

In 5:9-10, John goes on to record that **"they sang a new³³ song,³⁴ saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased³⁵ for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.³⁶ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.'"** As a result of the Lamb's authority from God to advance God's plan of the ages, the living creatures and elders sang a **"new song"**³⁷ (cf. Rev 14:3). This song represents new praise for deliverance about to take place.³⁸ In this song the Lamb receives honor as being worthy in view of four things. The first is His death. He was **"slain."**

The second reason the Lamb is worthy is because He **“purchased”** (redemption) for God, by His death, people from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. This represents divisions of humanity based on lineage, language, race, and political orientation.³⁹ Together these terms describe the universal nature of Christ’s people. It is important to note that this, however, does not teach universalism. Every person will not ultimately be saved. But people “from” every people group will be in heaven. How will people from groups that never heard the Gospel be in heaven? First, Jesus said that the Gospel will be preached to all the world by the end of the age (Matt 24:14). This includes all people groups who will eventually be reached for Christ (cf. Rev 14:2-3; 15:2-4). This assurance should motivate us as a church and as individuals to fulfill our responsibility for world evangelization. Second, I believe that those who die an early death—babies, infants, fetuses aborted—go into the presence of God. Every people group experiences these untimely tragedies and will populate heaven.⁴⁰

Third, the death of Christ not only saved men, it also made them priests and kings so that they would share in His kingdom (cf. 1 Pet 2:5, 9). Priesthood involves immediate access into God’s presence for praise and worship as well as the privilege of priestly service. The fourth is the blessing of His people by allowing them to rule on the earth (during the millennium).⁴¹ This is man’s ultimate end; he will worship God by fulfilling God’s ordained responsibilities on a new earth, for all eternity.

The company of worshippers expands to include all the angels of heaven. A second choir of worshippers joins now with the first choir and all heaven breaks loose! In 5:11-12, John writes, **“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud⁴² voice,⁴³ ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain⁴⁴ to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’”** An innumerable host of angels now joins the four creatures and 24 elders in ascribing worth to the Lamb (cf. Dan 7:10; Ps 68:17-18; Matt 2:13). The Greek word for “myriad” (*miros*) means 10,000.⁴⁵ “Myriad of myriad” would mean 10,000 times 10,000. That’s 100 million! But this is in the plural—**“myriads of myriads”**—meaning hundreds of millions times hundreds of millions. The number is easily in the billions. But then John records that there are still **“thousands of thousands”** in addition to the billions. One thousand times one thousand is one million. But again, this is in the plural (**“thousands of thousands”**). So there are multiplied millions spilling over the billions of worshippers already counted. This staggering number exceeds the limits of human language and our ability to comprehend.⁴⁶ Multiplied billions are in this heavenly choir worshipping in heaven.

In 5:12, the angels use seven expressions (the perfect number is probably significant) to indicate the wonder of the Lamb.⁴⁷ The repetition of **“and”** (*kai*) between each quality brings special emphasis to each one individually. These characteristics of which Jesus is worthy (power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, blessing) are things that He already possesses in heaven. Therefore, the song of praise, which the angels are singing, implies that He is worthy to break the seals and to open the scroll (that is to commence the period of the great tribulation) in order to gain these on earth, even as He already possesses them in heaven. As I understand this song it is earthly power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing which our Lord is worthy to receive. The events of chapters 6-19 actually bring these to pass.⁴⁸

(1) He is worthy to **“receive power.”** Power (*dunamis*) is mentioned first perhaps because the immediate situation calls for the need of great power to accomplish His purposes in the earth. He alone, as the perfect God-man Savior, is worthy of such power for He alone will and can use it with perfect justice and equity (Isa 11).

- (2) **“And riches”** (*ploutos*) refers to the wealth of the universe. All this is His by creation and now by redemption and reclamation.
- (3) **“And wisdom”** (*sophia*) refers to the Lord’s omniscience and its wise use in carrying out the purposes of God in the world.
- (4) **“And might”** (*ischuos*) refers to working might or power in action and stresses His omnipotence to carry out God’s will.
- (5) **“And honor”** (*time*) refers to the esteem, the value and respect which is due to Christ because of who He is and what He has and will accomplish to the glory of God, and the benefit of the world. He deserves public distinction.
- (6) **“And glory”** (*doxa*) refers to the tribute and public display of adoration that should accrue to Christ, and again this stems from His person and work, both past, present, and future.
- (7) **“And blessing”** (*eulogia*) refers to the praise that should be given to the Lord because of His wonderful acts of redemption and reclamation.

Our passage closes with universal praise to the Father and the Son (5:13-14). John writes, **“And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion⁴⁹ forever and ever.’ And the four living creatures kept saying, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshiped.”** In this vision John **“heard” “every created thing”** giving praise to God and to the Lamb. The crescendo to this symphony of praise is all creation, everywhere and everything worships the Father and the Son. The stones, the birds, the animals, and the fish finally cry out—all creation had been groaning under the futility of the curse, now they know that they are about to be set free (Rom 8:18-23).⁵⁰

In Revelation 4 and 5, the sequence of praise shows that the first two are addressed to God, the next two, to the Lamb, and the last one to both.⁵¹ It is God who is praised as the Creator, in Revelation 4 (4:11). It is the Son who is praised in Revelation 5, as the Reconciler of creation (Col 1:20). Thus, every living creature praises both Father and Son. God the Father and God the Son are both equally to be worshipped forever and ever.⁵² One of the weaknesses today is that many people want to worship “God” but they don’t want to worship Jesus. Yet, the Father has said that there is no life apart from Jesus (John 3:35-36).

Our passage concludes as the worship culminates in John’s vision with the four creatures saying **“Amen”** repeatedly, after the vast crowd fell silent. The elders are then seen worshipping by prostrating themselves before God’s throne (cf. 4:10).

A boy once captured two little birds and put them in a cage. A man saw the boy carrying the cage and asked him what he was going to do with the birds. “Oh,” the boy replied, “I’m going to play with them for a while and then feed them to my cat.” The man looked at the caged birds and took pity on them. “Say, I’d like to buy the cage and the birds from you. How much do you want for them?” The boy thought for a minute and then named his price. The man paid it and the boy handed over the cage, after which the man immediately opened the cage and set the birds free.

That’s what Jesus did for us. Satan had us caged and was going to feed us into the jaws of eternal death. But Jesus Christ purchased us, cage and all, and set us free. We’re going to be worshipping Him for all eternity because He paid that price. We need to start practicing our worship down here because He alone is worthy.⁵³

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Notes

¹ Revised from Michael P. Green, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989).

² Four new heavenly scenes are introduced by the phrase “and I saw” (*kai eidon*) in 5:1, 2, 6, and 11. In 5:11, the NASB translates *kai eidon* as: “Then I looked.”

³ Gk. *katasphragizo* is a compound verb that means, “tightly sealed, firmly sealed,” and so, “very hidden, very secure.” The only other biblical occurrences of this verb are found in the Greek Old Testament (Job 9:7; 37:7).

⁴ Similar scrolls are found in Isa 29:11 and Ezek 2:9-10.

⁵ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation: NICNT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 142.

⁶ The contents of the scroll seem clear enough. Yet, there have been many other alternative interpretations offered: (1) the Lamb’s Book of Life, (2) the book of redemption containing God’s eternal plan for salvation, (3) Christ’s title deed to planet earth, (4) the book of the New Covenant, and (5) a testament or will assuring that the inheritance is reserved by God. For more information see Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 376-79.

⁷ Scholars note that it was less common for a scroll to have writing on both sides, since the backside of a papyrus scroll was more difficult to write upon.

⁸ The “strong angel” (cf. Rev 10:1; 18:21) is could be Gabriel, the one who ordered the closing and sealing of the book to Daniel (see Dan 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26). His name means, “strength of God.” Others believe he is the archangel Michael, who will play a major role in end-time events (Dan 12:1-3).

⁹ The strong angel’s loud voice indicates his authority and the importance of what he says. The phrase “loud voice” occurs 20 other times in Revelation (1:10; 5:12; 6:10; 7:2, 10; 8:13; 10:3; 11:12; 12:10; 14:2, 7, 9, 15, 18; 16:1, 17; 19:1, 17; 21:3).

¹⁰ The Greek word “and” (*kai*) can be translated “and, even, or also.” In this context, it should be rendered “even.” Greek grammarians call this an “epexegetical” conjunction as which means “explanatory; drawing out the meaning of something.” See Matthew S. DeMoss, *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of New Testament Greek* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 52.

¹¹ Steven J. Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1995), 73.

¹² The expression “to weep greatly” (*eklaion polu*) conveys a “noisy grief, a wailing.” A form of the word *klaio* (“weep”) also occurs in Rev 5:5; 18:9, 11, 15, and 19.

¹³ Thomas writes, “He did not want to see God’s vindication of His people as a part of the Old Testament Messianic hope deferred for an undetermined period.” Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, 386.

¹⁴ This is the only place in the New Testament where these two Messianic titles occur together.

¹⁵ Isa 11:1, 10; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Matt 22:42-43; Rom 15:12.

¹⁶ Keathley writes, “Since the one standing is ‘*the* Lamb of God,’ we might have expected to find the Greek article with the noun, but it is absent. Why? Because the absence of the article draws our attention to the quality or character of Christ as God’s sacrificial Lamb. Further, the term used here is the Greek *arnion*. The regular word for lamb is *arnon*. *Arnion* is the diminutive form and means ‘little Lamb,’ but it came to be used as a term of endearment. The sacrificial lambs were not just lambs taken out of the flock, but those, which had often been brought into the home, cared for and loved. It expresses God’s love for His Son and what it cost Him to give Him for us.” Hampton Keathley III, *Studies in Revelation* (www.bible.org: Biblical Studies Press, 1997), 122.

¹⁷ The diminutive form of *amnos* (“lamb,” namely, *arnion*) enhances the contrast with the lion. The lion is a picture of strength and majesty, but this lamb was meek and gentle. Christ combines both sets of characteristics. See Dr. Thomas Constable, *Dr. Constable’s Notes on Revelation*, 2003, www.soniclight.org, 66.

¹⁸ The word “Lamb” (*arnion*) is used 29 times in Revelation and only once elsewhere (John 21:15).

¹⁹ John is the only New Testament writer who described Jesus as the Lamb, though Peter came close in 1 Peter 1:19.

²⁰ “The Lamb says: simplicity, meekness, white fleece, smallness, innocence, purity, helplessness, and submission to sacrifice. The Lion says: strength, size, golden mane, grandeur, courage, untamed power. How paradoxical that both images speak of Christ! Neither is a perfect image; each symbolizes different characteristics of the same infinite Person.” Preaching Today Citation: Luci Shaw, *Leadership*, Vol. 2, no. 3.

²¹ “In one brilliant stroke John portrays the central theme of New Testament revelation—victory through sacrifice.” See Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 144.

²² Gk. *sphazo*, Rev 5:6, 9, 12; 6:4, 9; 13:3, 8; 18:24; 1 John 3:12.

²³ Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 76.

²⁴ See Rev 12:3; 13:1, 11; 17:3-4; Num 23:22; Deut 33:17; 1 Sam 2:1; 2 Sam 22:3; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 18:2; 75:4, 10; 112:9; 132:17; 148:14; Dan 7:7, 20-21; 8:5.

²⁵ An alternative interpretation is that the clause “which are the seven Spirits” refers to both the seven horns and the seven eyes. In this case John may have meant that the Lamb had the seven spirits (angelic beings), who are powerful and perceptive, at His disposal.

²⁶ Cf. Rev 5:6-7; 6:16; 7:17; 17:14; 22:1, 3.

²⁷ Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 86-87.

²⁸ This is clear in the Greek text from the gender of *kekastos*, translated “having.”

²⁹ This is the only place in Scripture where angels praise God with harps.

³⁰ The Jews believed that angels carried human prayers to God (cf. Rev 8:3).

³¹ It is also possible that these prayers reveal that the church in heaven will be praying for those who become believers in the tribulation period and for the nation of Israel.

³² Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 90.

³³ Gk. *kainen*, lit. fresh, distinctive in quality, rather than recent.

³⁴ See also Pss 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isa 42:10.

³⁵ The word “purchase” (*agorazo*) pictures the acquisition of slaves in a marketplace and then setting them free. That’s what Christ did for us on the cross. See also Rev 3:18; 13:17; 14:3-4; 18:11. BDAG classifies this word under the broad meaning “to secure the rights to someone by paying a price, buy, acquire as property.”

³⁶ “Interestingly, of all the songs in the Book of Revelation, not one is a solo. The twenty-four elders sing and cast their crowns before His feet, the united voices of countless angels resound, every living creature in heaven and earth and under the earth and all that is in them are joined in one song. Those who are victorious over the beast are given harps and a song to sing. In every case multitudes of people or angels unite in the same song with absolute unity.” Preaching Today Citation: Graham Kendrick, *Leadership*, Vol. 15, no. 2.

³⁷ Mounce suggests that this “new song” celebrates Christ’s death that inaugurated a new covenant. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 147.

³⁸ Beasley-Murray writes, “This [i.e., “a new song”] is a well-known expression in the psalms, relating to songs sung on festal occasions and celebrating new mercies from God, especially his deliverances from distress (e.g., Ps 40:1, 98:1). It receives a deeper meaning in Isaiah 42:10, where the new song relates to the new and greater deliverance which the Lord is about to make in the earth.” G.R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation: NCBC* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1978), 126-127.

³⁹ “Tribe” means the same descent, clan, and family lineage. “Tongue” refers to people speaking the same language. “People” means those of the same race. Nation refers to those bound together by political unity, habits, and customs. Cf. Rev 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15.

⁴⁰ Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 93.

⁴¹ Some translations render this song in the first person (“You have redeemed *us*...,” 2:8, AV). Others put it in the third person (“You have redeemed *men*...,” e.g., NASB, NIV). This variation reflects a difference in the Greek texts that underlie these translations. I prefer the text family used as a basis for the NASB and NIV translations.

⁴² They speak in a loud (*megas*) voice. *Megas* speaks of both the intensity and degree.

⁴³ Please note the word “voice” (*phone*) is singular which emphasizes they are speaking in perfect unity, as one.

⁴⁴ Morris writes, “The Greek perfect tense here signifies that the Lamb was not only slain at a point of time, but that the efficacy of His death is still present in all its power.” Leon Morris, *The Book of Revelation: TNTC* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 97.

⁴⁵ Cf. Rev 9:16; Luke 12:1; Acts 21:20; Heb 12:22; Jude 14.

⁴⁶ Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 93.

⁴⁷ See also Morris, *The Book of Revelation*, 101.

⁴⁸ I’m indebted to my friend, Bob Deffinbaugh for this insight.

⁴⁹ Gk. *kratos* is particularly used of ruling power or sovereignty or dominion (cf. Rev 1:6).

⁵⁰ Some scholars argue that against the inclusion of the animal world on the grounds that non-intelligent beings can hardly sing praises. However, this is to ignore the apocalyptic symbolism of Revelation. Throughout, animate and inanimate creation fights on the side of God against Satan (e.g., 12:14, 16). Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation: ECNT* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 265.

⁵¹ There is also a gradual enlargement in the size of the choirs.

⁵² How appropriate this is in the light of the last verse of the psalms: “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!” (Ps 150:6).

⁵³ Tony Evans, *Totally Saved* (Chicago; Moody, 2002), 60.