

## Revelation 5:8-14

### "From Weeping To Rejoicing"

You remember the story, it's found in Genesis Ch 22. Abraham is there leading his son, his only son Isaac whom he loves up Mt Moriah to be sacrificed to the Lord upon the instruction of the Lord.

It's there that Isaac becomes a foreshadowing of another Son, another *only* Son beloved of His Father who would become the sacrifice for the sin of the world. Abe lays the wood of the altar upon Isaacs back & they begin to make their way up the Mt (even as Jesus would bear His own altar, carrying it up another Mt called Calvary).

Be that as it may Isaac looks around (oblivious to the fact that his dad is preparing to lay him down on the altar of sacrifice) & says, "Dad, I see here that we have the fire, & we have the wood...but where is the *lamb* for as burnt offering?" Abe looks at him & says to him, "*My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.*"<sup>1</sup>

Abe commences to bind his son, lay him down & as he takes the knife & prepares to plunge it into his son's heart the Angel of the Lord cries out to him, & stops him saying to him; "*Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.*"<sup>2</sup> As to where God kept Abe from offering *his son*, God would not w/hold *His Son*, His only Son whom He loved for us but allowed His life to be a sacrifice for the sin of the world.

What's interesting is that when Abe looked around after the Angel of the Lord stopped him he noticed something caught in the thicket... it was a *ram*. Yet he'd said that God would provide a *lamb*; what gives? Isaac asked about the lamb, what they sacrificed that day was a ram; where is the lamb that God Himself would provide?

Flash forward some 2,000 years & there he is; J.B. preaching the way of the Lord, preparing people for the Lord & as he looks up here comes Jesus making His way through the crowd. It's at that point that John answers Isaac's question posed over 2,000 yrs prior. "Where is the lamb?" John says, "*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*"<sup>3</sup>

Flash forward again & here we are in this heavenly happening of Rev Ch 5. John sees in the right hand of Him who sits on the throne a scroll sealed w/7 seals. A strong angel stands up and issues a challenge in a loud voice to the far throws of the universe, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"

<sup>1</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (Ge 22:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (Ge 22:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (Jn 1:29). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

And no one in heaven, no one on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look at it. John begins to weep, he begins to wail & sob convulsively because from his perspective all human hope is lost. Then one of the elders looks at John & says to John, “Do not weep, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David has prevailed to open the scroll & to loose its seals.”

John turns to look, but he doesn't see a Lion...He sees a Lamb. A Lamb as though it had been slain standing before the throne, bearing the marks of sacrifice fresh before the throne of God; standing there in all power, w/all knowledge, in the fullness of the power of the Holy Spirit...The He came & took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Notice, Vs 8

### Vs 8

FYI if you ever wondered where all of those ridiculous notions of being in heaven playing harps & floating on clouds came from this is it. However you should realize that the word harp here isn't what we think of when the word “harp” is used. It's the word “kitharas” from which we get our word “guitar”. As for how many strings, whether it's acoustic or electric I don't know; but I have a feeling when we get to heaven we're gonna rock ☺!

Listen, God likes music. He created it & when it comes to praising Him in heaven, music will accompany our worship. Here's the cool part, you'll all be awesome musicians & you won't ever even have to practice! If you were all handed a guitar when you came in here & when worship began we all started playing... can I just say, “That wouldn't sound like heaven ☺...” However when you're there you'll be a virtuosos, a musical genius and worship in heaven will blow our minds.

We also note that they had these golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 1<sup>st</sup> of all we notice that there is a connection between prayer & praise, they are praising the Lord & pouring out these prayers *before* the Lord. Of Course we realize that as these elders symbolically offer these prayers of God's people before the throne that they are acting in the role of priestly service.

It was found in the tabernacle as well as in the temple. There before the Holy of holies was the altar of incense that the priest would offer regularly before the presence of God. He would take coal from the altar and place it in the golden bowl w/the incense, which would then cause the sweet aroma to ascend before the presence of God.

The picture was that of the prayers of God's people ascending as a sweet aroma before God's throne. This is what we see happening here in this heavenly scene. What we *don't* see happening is the elders acting in any way as mediators; this does not support praying to "saints" or seeing anyone outside of Christ as interceding for you. The bible is clear, **"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,"**<sup>4</sup> These elders are not praying *for* God's people, they're presenting the prayers of God's people.

This should give you a bit of insight as to how precious your prayers are to God. He "stores them" as it were in bowls of pure gold & at the right time they're brought *to* His throne poured out *before* God's throne & God moves in accordance w/these prayers that have been prayed according to His will.

What exactly makes for the right time we don't know. Perhaps these bowls are different sizes, maybe some of them are the size of a gallon, 5 gallons, 50 gallons (I don't know). When we pray we throw our teaspoon worthy of prayer into the bowl, & when it fills up it's poured out & God moves. There's really no way of knowing but it's interesting to speculate.

**What we do know from this is that the prayers of God's people play a vital part in God's governing of the world. Perhaps these prayers represent all the times God's people have prayed, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done." Now it's time, & here it comes.**

**Vs 9-10**

You guys, amongst other things here's what I want you to see. True worship is nothing that needs to be forced, you don't need to be pumped up or manipulated in anyway, worship will come naturally to anyone who beholds the Lamb. Worship is a response, it is a result of realizing who God is, what He's done & seeing the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

**That's the job (if you will) of the worship leader, not to get you worked up, but to lift your eyes up that you might behold Jesus. That you might gaze upon His love, His sacrifice, His grace, His mercy, His forgiveness, His worthiness, His righteousness, His holiness...that you might worship Him who's redeemed you through the shedding of His blood.**

Both man & angel alike upon beholding the Lamb fall down before Him, offer prayer & praises to Him singing (Vs 9-10, read)

<sup>4</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (1 Ti 2:5). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

You guys there's so much that I'd love to talk to you about concerning this particular portion of the Word of God. *There's no way time will allow us to explore it all. One thing I want you to notice that comes by way of observation is something that the text doesn't draw attention to specifically & that is this: John has gone from weeping to rejoicing through a simply having His perspective placed appropriately upon Jesus seeing that God can make a way where there is no way.*

God is so faithful to make sure that we realize that we have no hope w/in or around ourselves, our own abilities, our own resources and then coming through in such a way that leaves us glorying in the Lord. It's hopeless from our perspective, but God has a plan & He is still on the throne. The bible declares that, *"Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning."*<sup>5</sup>

*How many times we've seen in the scriptures what seemed to be a hopeless situation. There was Moses, he'd just led about 2 million people out of the nation of Egypt & they're on the beach (as it were) in front of the Red Sea, Mt on the left, Mt on the right, the Sea in front of them & the Egyptian army closing in behind them. Nowhere to go, nothing they could do; from their perspective it was hopeless. But God had a plan. There's Israel being taunted day & night by a giant of a man named Goliath, everyday he would come out & taunt the armies of Israel; He was 10' tall, his staff was like a weaver's beam & his iron spearhead weighed 600 shekels, his chainmail coat was 5,000shekels of bronze. He was huge & everyday he offered to face off w/anyone from the Israelite army...it was a hopeless situation; but God had a plan.*

*1 Sam Ch 13 the Philistine army encamps against Israel, 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen & people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. The men of Israel hid in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes & in pits, Saul trembling and hopeless. But God had a plan, we could talk about Gideon, or Daniel & the lion's den, we could speak of Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego but I think you get the point. Weeping turning to rejoicing by the power & plans of God; there was Jesus torn & battered, beaten & bruised, shedding His blood & dying upon the cross; hopes dashed, weeping & wailing...but God had a plan; 3 days later there would be unparalleled rejoicing.*

*Perhaps you're in a situation that seems hopeless & you feel helpless; I want you to know that God has a plan & He specializes in making a way where there in no way...*

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<sup>5</sup> *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Ps 30:5). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

“They sang a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll & to open its seals;” why? What makes Jesus worthy? “For You were slain & have redeemed us to God by Your blood.”

Even as the sacrifice of Christ is always fresh before the throne, never stale, never so “oh that was thousands of years ago” even so the theme of redemption is always new, ever suggesting fresh thoughts of praise & worship unto the Lamb.

Jesus has “redeemed” us to God. As you may know the word redeemed speaks of a purchase price, of the setting free of a slave buy paying a price. We were all sold under the slave market of sin. Romans 6 makes it very clear that we demonstrated our enslavement to sin through being obedient to sin, it’s ambitions, drives & desires.

And if you were to be set free from slavery to sin there would have to be a purchase price. But you can’t be set free from sin through corruptible things like silver or gold...no, the price is much, much higher than things that perish. The purchase price of your redemption would be blood, not just any blood; only the blood of One sinless could ever redeem those sold *under* sin. What did Peter say? *“...you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*<sup>6</sup>

So now we rejoice, right? We’ve been redeemed, reconciled to God through the blood of J.C. Our sins have been erased, removed as far as the east is from the west. We enter into the blessing w/David who declared, *“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity,”*<sup>7</sup>

Here’s where we get a glimpse of who it is who’s singing this song isn’t it? Which give us more weight regarding our pre-trib rapture position. Because they’re singing of redemption by blood; not only are they the redeemed, but they’ve been redeemed out of every tribe & tongue & people & nation; it can’t be Israel; it certainly can’t be angelic beings; this is the song of the church. Those whom God has called out of the world to be the bride of Christ; “& have made us kings a priests to our God & we shall reign on the earth.” Again, it’s the church that have been made a kingdom of priests, a “royal priesthood” (1 Pet 2:9). It’s to the church that Jesus promised a role in ruling and reigning w/Him upon the earth (Rev 2:26 & 3:21).

<sup>6</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (1 Pe 1:18-19). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>7</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (Ps 32:1-2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

This song is the fruit of effective evangelism, for God so loved the world...Jesus said, "Go into all the world & make disciples of all nations", these are those who've been redeemed out of every tribe & tongue & people & nation.

I would quickly draw to your attention 2 words in Vs 10, "out of" you've been redeemed *out of* the world. You're not longer of the world, *in* the world but not *of* the world because Jesus has redeemed you *out of* the world. Therefore our lives aren't to emulate this world but we're to emulate Christ Who's redeemed us, bought us w/a price, we are not our own therefore we're to glorify God in our spirit & in our body which belongs to Him.

As to where the song of Rev Ch 4 praises the Lord as our Creator, the song of Ch 5 worships Him as our Redeemer. This song exalts the *Person* who redeemed us "You were slain" (the Lamb, J.C. ) It honors the *Price* of redemption, "You were slain", it honors the *Destination & Reconciliation* that's come to pass through redemption "You've redeemed us *to God*", it honors the *Price* of redemption "Your blood". **This song brings into focus the Scope of redemption "Every tribe & tongue & people & nation" & it honors the Results of redemption both presently at that moment & prophetically as God's plan unfolds, "You have made us kings & priests to our God & we shall reign on the earth."**

#### Vs 11-12

Now all the hosts of heaven enter in & the worship continues to build...Btw how can anyone read this & see Jesus as anything less than God? For all the hosts of heaven (in fact [as we'll see] of all the universe) to worship Jesus before the throne of God would be gross idolatry at best & blasphemy at worst if Jesus were not God...

When John tells us of all the angelic beings worshiping God we get the idea not of 100 million & millions & millions, he's simply saying "too many to count" an innumerable host of angels worshiping the Lamb of God. (You might jot down Heb 1 and read it in conjunction w/this knowing that the angels of God will not worship anything or anyone less than God).

But check it out; as to where in Ch 4 the Cherubim prompt the elders to worship, here it seems as though the elders prompt the cherubim & the angels to worship; it's a beautiful cycle of encouraging one another unto greater & greater praise & worship unto the Lord!

Isaac asked "Where is the Lamb?" J.B. proclaimed "Behold the Lamb" & here the declaration is made "Worthy is the Lamb!"



Vs 12 tells us that they were saying in a “loud voice”; there’s fervor here, intensity, more than volume there’s vehemence; there is passion to their proclamation. It’s as though they’re lifting up a shout of praise to the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world.

Here’s the problem; right? What can you give to the One who has everything? Jesus already has all these things. The world would credit none of these things to Jesus while upon the earth, yet they’re all His & rightfully acknowledged in heaven.

Jesus has all power, all wealth, all wisdom, all strength & honor, glory & blessing. Of course we could expound on these things & think on these things but perhaps we’d do well to think of Him as having these things, giving these things to us & how is it that we honor Him w/them?

Jesus is the One who gives to us the power of the Holy Spirit, the ability to serve Him. The issue then would be “What am I doing w/my abilities & am I serving Jesus whole heartedly?” As for riches, His very streets are paved w/gold, He doesn’t need our money; I suppose the question isn’t so much does He need our resources, but do we believe He’s *worthy of our resources?* If so you’ll find a place where you believe that Jesus is at work & you’ll support it. It’s easy to say that Jesus is worthy of all that we are, but to *show* it by standing behind and supporting godly ministry can be another thing altogether can’t it?

“Wisdom”, again He doesn’t need my advice; but I certainly need the mind of Christ. There are those who think that you’d have to be an idiot to be a Christian; I think just the opposite is true. *It’s amazing how much time, effort, & energy people will put in to learning a certain trade, or skill to advance themselves on the earth (that’s all well & good), but I’d challenge you to use your brains a little more for the Lord. Study to show yourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed but who rightly divide the word of truth.*

As for strength, are you willing to surrender yourself completely to Jesus? Let Him use your life, to direct your life, will you yield your life to Him? Will honor Him, value Him, give priority to Him, bless Him & glorify Him; that is shine the spotlight on Him, speak *of* & give credit *to* Him for all things good in your life?

#### Vs 13-14

Here we see it again, the worship of God who sits on the Throne & of the Lamb who is there before the throne. Worshiping the Father & the Son as One...

But this is the crescendo, the culmination of worship as all of creation joins together.

I mean we're talking sea life, animal life, all of heaven & all of hell ascribing blessing & honor & glory & power to God the Father & God the Son. This is that which Paul wrote of in Philippians when he said that, *"...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*<sup>8</sup>

Then the 4 living creatures got a little "Pentecostal" and said, "Amen!" Is it ok to say "Amen" in a church service? To audibly agree and say "Yes" in agreement w/the word going forth? Well, it's gonna happen in heaven so I say... "Amen!"

Then the 24 elders fell prostrate before the throne in complete submission & adoration of the Lamb & of Him who sits on the throne.

Again you guys this is how contagious, infectious, irresistible & communicable true worship is... As Ch 5 begins it builds & builds until all of creation explodes in a chorus of praise.

Worthy is the Lamb...He is our Redeemer. Let me encourage you that if perhaps you've gone so far as to acknowledge Jesus as Creator, but haven't trusted Him as your redeemer that you do so today.

Perhaps you're in a situation that seems hopeless, God has a plan. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face...and the things of earth will grow strangely dim; in the light of His glory & grace...

#### Prayer Points:

Lord Jesus may the resolve of our hearts be to love You more. You were slain & You have redeemed us to God by Your blood; regardless of tribe, tongue, people or nation, You have so loved us that You have given Yourself for us & You have made us kings and priests to our God & we shall reign on the earth...All power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory & blessing be to You. Lord be there anyone here hurting to day, whose hearts may be heaving w/sorrow I pray that they would fix their eyes on You, that You would take them from weeping to rejoicing as You make a way where it seems perhaps there is no way.

If you're here today and you've not come to know J.C. as Your Redeemer, you've acknowledged Him perhaps in creation, but haven't experienced redemption. *You've not been forgiven of your sin nor have you been reconciled to God through the blood of Jesus than today I want to invite you to respond to J.C. through turning from your sin & trusting in Him.* Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door & knock" if you will hear His voice & open the door of your heart than He will come into you, forgive you & make you new.

<sup>8</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (Php 2:10-11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.