

## APOCALYPSE OF JOHN

### Session 12: John's Heavenly Vantage Point, Part 2 (Revelation 5)

#### REVIEW

A. Structure of John's Apocalypse:

1. Prologue (Rev. 1:1-20)
2. Part I: The Revelation of "what is "now" (PRESENT) (Rev. 2:1-3:22)
3. Part II: The Revelation of "what must take place after this" (FUTURE) (Rev. 4:1-22:6)
  - a. Introduction: John's Heavenly Vantage Point (Rev. 4:1-5:14)
  - b. First Vision of the Future (Rev. 6:1-8:1)
  - c. Second Vision of the Future (Rev. 8:2-11:19)
  - d. Third Vision of the Future (Rev. 12:1-22:6)
4. Epilogue (Rev. 22:7-21)

B. John's Heavenly Vantage Point (Revelation 4):

1. **"a door standing open in heaven . . . 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this'"**
2. **"a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it"**
3. **"before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal"**
4. **"Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders . . . crowns of gold on their heads"**
5. **"four living creatures . . . like a lion . . . ox . . . man . . . eagle"**

#### THE SCROLL WITH SEVEN SEALS (Revelation 5:1)

**<sup>1</sup>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.**

A. Compare Ezekiel 2:9-10:

<sup>9</sup>Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll, <sup>10</sup>which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe.

B. Compare Exodus 32:15-16:

<sup>15</sup>Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. <sup>16</sup>The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

- C. What kind of Roman document was sealed with seven seals?
- D. What are the contents of Revelation's "scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals"? (see Revelation 6:1-8:1)

### **THE LION OF JUDAH AND THE ROOT OF DAVID (Revelation 5:2-5)**

<sup>2</sup>And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" <sup>3</sup>But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. <sup>4</sup>I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. <sup>5</sup>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 (*nikaō*). He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

A. Some Background on the "Lion of Judah" and "Root of David":

1. The Offspring of Eve (Genesis 3:15):

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

2. The Offspring of Abraham (Genesis 22:18):

...through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed....

3. The Ruler from Judah (Genesis 49:9-10):

<sup>9</sup>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? <sup>10</sup>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.

4. The Offspring of David (2 Samuel 7:11b-16):

<sup>11b</sup>”The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: <sup>12</sup>When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup>I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. <sup>15</sup>But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.

5. The “Root” or “Shoot” or “Branch” of David:

a. See Isaiah 11:1-12:

<sup>1</sup>A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—<sup>3</sup>and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. <sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup>They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>10</sup>In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. <sup>11</sup>In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea. <sup>12</sup>He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth....

b. See Sirach 47:22 (ca. 180 B.C., found in the *Apocrypha*):

But the Lord will never give up his mercy, nor cause any of his works to perish; he will never blot out the descendants of his chosen one, nor destroy the posterity of him who loved him; so he gave a remnant to Jacob, and to David a root of his stock.

c. See Testament of Judah 24:1-6 (2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., found in the *Pseudepigrapha*):

<sup>1</sup>”And after this there shall arise for you a Star from Jacob in peace: And a man shall arise from my posterity like the Sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in gentleness and righteousness, and in him will be found no sin. <sup>2</sup>And the heavens will be opened upon him to pour out the spirit as a blessing of the Holy Father. <sup>3</sup>And he will pour the spirit of grace on you. And you shall be sons in truth, and you will walk in his first and final decrees. <sup>4</sup>This is the Shoot of God Most High; this is the fountain of life for all humanity. <sup>5</sup>Then he will illumine the scepter of my kingdom, <sup>6</sup>and from your root will arise the Shoot, and through it will arise the rod of righteousness for the nations, to judge and save all that call on the Lord.

6. The Messiah as “Lion” and “Posterity of David”:

See 4 Ezra 12:31-32 (ca. A.D. 100, found in the *Pseudepigrapha*):

<sup>31</sup>And as for the lion whom you saw rousing up out of the forest and roaring and speaking to the eagle and reproofing him for his unrighteousness, and as for all his words that you have heard, <sup>32</sup>this is the Messiah whom the Most High has kept until the end of days, who will arise from the posterity of David, and will come and speak to them; he will denounce them for their ungodliness and for their wickedness, and will cast up before them their contemptuous dealings.

B. Conclusions—Jesus as the “Lion of Judah” and “Root of David”:

**THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN (Revelation 5:6)**

<sup>6</sup>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.

A. “A Lamb” (*arnion* versus *amnos*; compare Jeremiah 11:19; John 21:15):

B. “Looking as if it had been slain” (*sphazō*; compare Isaiah 53:7):

C. “Standing in the center of the throne”:

**THE INTERPRETIVE HYMN (Revelation 5:7-14)**

<sup>7</sup>He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

<sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>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!”

<sup>13</sup>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!” <sup>14</sup>The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

A. A “Lion” and a “Lamb”?

B. Preview of first vision of future (Revelation 6:1 - 8:1):

“I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals.” (Revelation 6:1)