

Date: November 29, 2017
 Title: "Claiming What is Rightfully His"
 Text: Revelation 4 and 5
 Theme: God shows Himself to be faithful in completing what He began.

Introduction:

What is this all about?

- Written to **encourage** a **persecuted** Church by reminding them of . . .
 1. Who God is and
 2. His Control to bring His *Story* to its proper end. Both . . .
 - a. For the believing and
 - b. For the unbelieving

This entire Letter tells us how He goes about doing this.

The real estate industry may see some large land deals these days, from the \$200 million Penthouse in London to the \$2 billion Antilla building in Mumbai, but these pale in comparison to some historical land deals. Here are three massive land deals in history:

A. The Alaskan Purchase

The U.S. purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 is considered to be one of the largest land deals in history. Fearing another war with Britain after the Crimean War, Russia rushed to sell Alaska to the United States for just \$7.2 million, or about two cents per acre, in order to prevent nearby British Columbia from taking over the territory, and to bolster its struggling finances.

Today, Alaska is of course worth much more than that. The state encompasses some 586,412 square miles, or more than 375 million acres. Even at a cost of just \$100 per acre, that would equate to more than \$37 billion. Plus the state churns out hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil each year. Alaska is one of the few states with no income tax.

B. The Louisiana Purchase

The Louisiana Purchase from France in 1803 is another U.S. acquisition that's considered to be one of the largest land deals ever. With a purchase price of just \$15 million, the U.S. added some 13 states worth of territories at less than three cents per acre.

But the Louisiana Purchase almost didn't happen for a couple reasons. President Thomas Jefferson was widely criticized for acting above and beyond his constitutional authority, especially given his strict interpretation of the Constitution. Secondly, many Federalists worried that the U.S. was funding a war against Spain by selling to Napoleon in France.

Today the land in the Louisiana Purchase is worth significantly more. The deal encompassed some 800,000 square miles, which equates to approximately 512,000,000 acres. With land costs today averaging between \$1,000 and \$4,000 per acre in the continental U.S., the total value of the Louisiana Purchase is therefore likely to be near \$1.2 trillion.

C. The Treaty of Tordesillas

Back in the 1400s and 1500s, Spain and Portugal were the world's two largest superpowers carving up the world. The discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus led to some disputes about who had rights to certain territories. Eventually, the two countries agreed to divide the world along a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands.

Unfortunately, the New World turned out to move mostly west in direction and the deal turned out to be rather one-sided. Spain ended up colonizing the vast majority of South America with the exception of present-day Brazil, where Portuguese is still spoken. After 1898, the treaty became somewhat obsolete as the two world superpowers grew less influential.

While the total value of this deal is impossible to calculate, the control that Spain maintained over most of Latin America played an important role in history. The majority of the countries in the region asserted their independence in the early to mid 1800s. By the 1900s some Latin American countries were participating in the World Wars as U.S. allies.

D. The Bottom Line

It may be easy to gasp at the current real estate market and the tens to hundreds of millions of dollars spent acquiring palatial estates. However, these purchases seem minuscule compared to a time when countries could sell an entire state.¹

This is what the REVELATION “reveals.” God is reclaiming what is rightfully His. Chapter four says He created it and chapter five says He redeemed it. On two fronts, He is the rightful owner and heir of all creation.

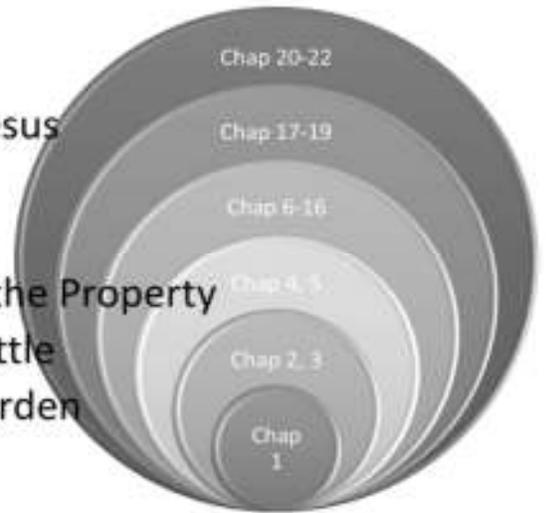
“Suppose a man were to buy a farm and pay for it. Possession would not be given until the following April. On the first day of April, he, with title deed in hand, would go to take possession of his property. But he might be met at the gate by the man who had been living there several years and be denied entrance. He would then go to the court house and later the sheriff and several policemen would come. The tenant might put up a fight during which several windows might be broken, the chicken house burned and other property destroyed. Finally however, the man would be handcuffed and led away to prison, and the rightful owner come into possession. The Day of Redemption, this is what we have before us in the book of Revelation. This old world was in bondage to sin. Some nineteen hundred years ago, CHRIST redeemed it not with ‘corruptible things, as silver and gold’ - but with his own ‘precious blood’ (I Peter 1:19). He did not immediately take possession of the earth, but permits a usurper (Satan) to wield sway until ‘April first.’ When that day arrives, he will take the title deed and come forth to claim His own. He could not have taken possession then for we were not yet born and the church must be completed before He takes over the earth.”²

In summary, “A *purchase* was made at the cross, and now the deed of that purchase is being claimed by its rightful owner.”³

THE BIG PICTURE:

Revelation is like a series of ever expanding concentric circles. The expansion of the circles increase until the entire created order is filled with a knowledge of His glory as the waters cover the seas. In the Letter, John moves between heaven and earth. For John, what we often look at as two worlds, he sees as one.

- Chap. 1 God / Jesus
- Chap. 2, 3 Church
- Chap. 4, 5 Throne
- Chap. 6-16 Seizing the Property
- Chap. 17-19 Final Battle
- Chap. 20-22 Final Garden



Chap. 2, 3	Chap. 4, 5
Earth	Heaven
6-22	
Earth/Heaven	

“A DOOR”

Occurs in Rev. 3:8, 20; 4:1

3:8, 20 = Opportunity

4:1 = Gateway / Passage

The divide between heaven and earth is perceptual. “Doors” only separate Heaven and Earth. Although there will be a fusion of these two and currently they are “separated,” the divide between the two is one of perception, not reality. We refer to death as “passing.”

“‘Heaven,’ God’s sphere of reality, is right here, close beside us, intersecting with our ordinary reality. It is not so much like a door opening high up in the sky, far away. It is more like a door opening right in front of us where before we could only see this room, this field, this street, suddenly, there is an opening leading into a different world – and an invitation to ‘come up’ and see what’s going on.”⁴ It is as if “heaven” is hiding in plain sight. It is like an illusion that when you look at it straight on you cannot see it. However, when you look at it from an angle, you see everything. You see what is hidden.

The book is written in seven sections, each of which run parallel to one another. Each part covers the same time period from the first to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time, each has a different focus and level of detail. Additionally, they are arranged in an ascending climatic order. A way of comprehending this is to visualize a seven transparent floor-plans, stacked together.⁵

PARALLEL

- 6:1 to 8:5 Seven Seals
- 8:6 to 11:19 Seven Trumpets
- 12:1 to 15:4 Seven Visions
- 15:5 to 16:21 Seven Bowls



1. These two chapters form a literary unit; chapter 4 shows God as Creator (the connotation of *Elohim*, God as creator, provider, and sustainer of all life, cf. [Psalm 104](#)) and chapter 5 shows God's Lamb (Jesus) as Redeemer (the connotation of YHWH, God as Savior, Redeemer, and covenant-making God, cf. [Psalm 103](#)). The larger literary context continues through the opening of the seven seals. However, the seals themselves begin in chapter 6 and continue through 8:1.
2. Chapter 4 forms a central theme (the secure glory and rule of YHWH) of the book of the Revelation. This heavenly throne scene is similar to the heavenly tabernacle of [Hebrews 8](#) and 9. This motif (God's heavenly glory) forms the central goal of early Jewish mysticism.
3. The book of the Revelation is not primarily the how and when of the Second Coming; it is primarily the sovereignty of God in human history. These two chapters are essential in understanding the remainder of the book and its purpose."⁶
4. "What we are witnessing in chapters 4 and 5, then, is not the final stage in God's purposes. This is not a vision of the ultimate 'heaven', seen as the final resting place of God's people. It is, rather the admission of John into 'heaven' as it is at the moment."⁷

5. "The purpose of Rev. 4 and 5 is to prepare for Rev. 6 and 7 (the opening of the seals of the scroll) and in a larger sense to help provide a background and basis for Rev. 6-22. At every point and step along the way through time into eternity the church and its members do well to remember these two chapters and remind themselves that, come what may, as children of God following His Word they are completely safe in the hands and under the providence of the Almighty (Rev. 4:8) Creator (4:11), Redeemer (5:5-14), and Sanctifier."⁸
6. Chapters 2 and 3 describe the church in the Last Days [from Pentecost to His Second Coming]. Chapters 4 and 5 describe what exists in heaven **during this same period**. This section starts with worship (4, 5) and ends with worship (7:9-17). In the midst of judgment and suffering (6:1-17), we have countless worshippers (7:9). The question asked by God's people is, "How long will this injustice persist" (6:9-11). God provides the answer in 6:12-7:17.
7. Chapters 4 and 5 form a cohesive picture. The beginning of 6:1 ties what we just read in chapters 4 and 5 with the beginning of chapter 6.
8. "Chapter 4 is where the story really starts. This is where John is given the 'revelation' that gives the book its title. Everything from this point on is part of the vision which is granted to him as he stands there in the heavenly throne room."⁹ He unlocks this scroll. Chapters six forward is the Creator; Redeemer reclaiming what is rightfully His.
9. 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. 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. 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).¹⁰

"The record of John's experience introduces two images that dominate the rest of the book: the throne of God and the Lamb of God. The word 'throne' appears 43 times from chapter 4 until the end of the book (19 times in chapters 4 and 5 alone), and the word 'Lamb' (referring to Christ) 28 - 7x4 - times. **Together these images constitute the hermeneutical, or interpretive, key to the entire book. They reveal in pictures the essential theology of the book of Revelation: God the creator reigns and is worthy of our complete devotion, and Jesus the faithful, slaughtered Lamb of God reigns with God, equally worthy of our complete devotion.**"¹¹

Again, the author of Revelation desires for the reader to see Daniel's imagery fulfilled in Revelation. They show Jesus as the One who fulfills Daniel's prophecy, receiving a kingdom and giving it to the saints.¹²

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The impression the author is after is, “This is that.” What Daniel spoke of concerning God is JESUS.

Description	Passages In Daniel and Revelation
Brought into the vision	Daniel 7:9; Revelation 4:1
Throne in heaven	Daniel 7:9a; Revelation 4:2a
God sitting on a throne	Daniel 7:9b; Revelation 4:2b
God's appearance on the throne	Daniel 7:9c; Revelation 4:3a
Fire before the throne	Daniel 7:9d-10a; Revelation 4:5
Heavenly servants surrounding the throne	Daniel 7:10b; Revelation 4:4b
The image of a sea	Daniel 7:2-3; Revelation 4:6
Books before the throne	Daniel 7:10; Revelation 5:1 and following
The books are opened	Daniel 7:10c; Revelation 5:2-5, 9
A divine figure approaching God's throne to receive authority to reign forever over a kingdom	Daniel 7:13-14a; Revelation 5:5b-7, 9a, 12-13
The kingdom includes those from all peoples, nations, and languages	Daniel 7:15; Revelation 5:4
The emotional experience of the one seeing the vision	Daniel 7:15; Revelation 5:4
Receiving heavenly counsel about the vision from one of the servants	Daniel 7:16; Revelation 5:5a
The saints are given divine authority to reign over a kingdom	Daniel 7:18, 22, 27a; Revelation 5:10
Mentions of God's eternal reign	Daniel 7:27b; Revelation 5:13-14

Outline:

When we read Revelation 4 and 5 there are primary ideas that come to the reader's attention.

CHAPTER 4	CHAPTER 5
Throne	Scroll
“One sitting on the throne” (v. 2)	“A Lamb standing” (v. 6)
Song	New Song
Participants	
4 living creatures (v. 6)	4 living creatures (vv. 6, 8, 14)
24 elders (vv. 4, 10)	24 elders (vv. 5, 6, 8)
	A strong angel (v. 2)
	Many angels (v. 11)
	Every created thing (v. 13)

What I believe we should do is note the various emphases in chapters 4 and 5.

FIRST, we will begin with the **THRONE** (vv. 1-6).

What John saw, “A throne stood in heaven” (4:2b-8a). John uses “throne” forty-three times in Revelation [35 verses] with Nineteen occurrences [12 verses] in chapters 4 and 5.

THRONE [verse occurrence]																					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1	1	1	7	5	1	5	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	2	1	1	2

Chapter 4 is a **Theophany**

Chapter 5 is a **Christophany**

We should contrast the language of “Satan’s seat” (2:9, 13 [**thronos**], 24; 3:9) with that of the “seat” seen in chapters 4 and 5. We must also not forget the political tension and the resulting persecution in which the church exists.

Verse 5 reminds us of Mt. Sinai, God’s transcendence. His apartness.

The seven Spirits of God speak to His perfection. Notice 5:6.

The sea of glass can simply be a sea of glass.

“The position from which the Father rules the affairs of His universe (Ps. Ps. 47:8; Isa. Isa. 6:1; Dan. Dan. 7:9-10). The throne pictures both *sovereignty* and *judgment* (Rev. Rev. 20:11+).”¹³

The impression one is to have is that the one who sits on the THRONE is GOD and thus IN CONTROL.

A. “He who sat **on** the throne”

Notice how the objects encircle the throne.

1. **Around** the throne (v. 4)
2. **Out from** the throne (v. 5)
3. **Before** the throne (v. 6)

The image is one where the THRONE is the center of attention. The THRONE and the one who sits on the THRONE dominate the imagery. Everything else revolves around it.

SECOND, we will consider the PARTICIPANTS

“The idea of a throne room, with someone sitting on the throne surrounded by senior counsellors, would instantly remind John’s readers of a very different court: that of Caesar. By strong implication, we are being invited to see that the powers of the world are simply parodies, cheap imitation copies, of the one Power who really and truly rules in heaven and on earth.”¹⁴

A. The twenty-four elders (vv. 4, 10)

- “Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads” (Rev. 4:4).
- “The twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,” (Rev. 4:10).
- “And one of the elders *said to me, “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.” (Rev. 5:5).
- “And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth” (Rev. 5:6).
- “When He 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” (Rev. 5:8).
- “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,” (Rev. 5:11).
- “And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped” (Rev. 5:14).
- “ And all the angels were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,” (Rev. 7:11).
- “Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’” (Rev. 7:13).
- “And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God” (Rev. 11:16).
- “And they *sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth” (Rev. 14:3).
- “And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’” (Rev. 19:4).

Who are they? What is their function in this scene?

Who are they?

12 Tribes of Israel

12 Apostles

Why 12/24? Some suggest completion and others speak of the priesthood.

They represent all the People of God

What they look like.

White garments ([imputed righteousness] 4:4)

Golden crowns ([rewards and reign] 4:4, 10)

Jesus comes, His people receive their reward, and they worship Him through song and gesture.

Carry harps ([worship / music] 5:8)

Carry incense ([prayer] 5:8)

Sitting

What they do/say.

Worship continuously (4:8-10)

To the Father - Creator (4:11 ["Old" song])

To the Son - Redeemer (5:9 ["New" song])

12; the Number of Completeness

There were 12 tribes in Israel and this symbolizes the completeness of the nation Israel. Jacob had 12 sons which were the heads or fathers of each of the 12 tribes of Israel which are likened to 12 princes. When God appeared to Jacob He told him, "Your name will not be called Jacob any longer. From now on your name will be Israel" (Gen 35:10). The name Jacob means "supplanter" which means "to supersede by force or treachery" which is what Jacob did when he took Esau's birthright for a bowl of stew (Gen 25:29-34) but now God is going to deal differently with Jacob because he repented of his supplanting ways and was now going to be called Israel, which in the Hebrew is "Yisra'el" and means "God prevails" which essentially means that Jacob stopped wrestling with God because he could not prevail against God (Gen 32:22-32).

- Jesus chose 12 disciples who later became the 12 apostles which seem to fit the context of the number 12 used elsewhere in the Bible as this number also signified governmental rule or authority. The betrayer, Judas, was replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:23-26).
- The New Jerusalem which descends out of heaven has 12 gates made of pearl which are manned by 12 angels. Each of the gates has been named after one of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- In Revelation 7, twelve thousands from each of the 12 tribes of Israel will be saved near the end of the present world system.
- The walls of the New Jerusalem are measured at 144 cubits high which is 12 multiplied (Rev 21:16).
- The New City is also 12,000 furlongs squared (Rev 21:16).
- There are 12 precious stones that will be used as the foundation of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:19-20).
- The wall of the city had 12 foundations with the 12 names of the apostles on each one (Rev 21:14).

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- Twelve thousand will be taken from the earth so that they may serve the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ (Rev 14:1-5).
- The high priest's breastplate had 12 precious stones embedded within them.
- Jesus very first words were spoken at the age of 12 (Luke 2:42).
- There was even a woman who had suffered from a blood hemorrhage for 12 years (Luke 8:40).
- There are 12 Minor Prophets in the Old Testament. They are called minor, not because they are less important than the Major Prophets, but due to their size being considerably smaller.
- There are 12 historical books in the Bible: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Sam, 2 Sam, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.
- There were 12 loaves of permanent offerings on the golden table (Lev 24:5).
- There were 12 explorers or spies sent into the land of Canaan (Duet 1:23).
- Solomon had 12 administrators in his kingdom (1 Kings 4:7).
- There were 12 men who laid 12 stones in building a monument to the Lord (Joshua 4:3).
- The Book of Chronicles contained 12 great priests.
- Twelve curses were indicated for disobedience to Israel (Duet 27).
- A young Israelite male took 12 years before he could be admitted as a "son of the law."
- There were the 12 sacrifices of animals that were to be given (Numb 7, 29).

B. The four living creatures (v. 6)

What are they and what is their role (v. 8)?

Why a Lion, Ox, Man, and Eagle?

Perhaps because of the positive character traits describing each?

Same as those in Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14.

Definitely Angelic and probably Cherubim.

WORSHIP

Continual and God centered

THIRD, we will look at the **SONG** (vv. 8-11).

When one reads the two chapters it appears chapter four celebrates God the Father as Creator and chapter five addresses God the son as Redeemer. The two complement each other.

The word "song" occurs three times in Revelation (5:9; 14:3; 15:3). However, a case can be made for reading/hearing far more songs than the occurrence of the word for "singing."

Mark S. Wilson notes how, "Many people think Revelation is a dark, frightening book. But despite this initial appearance because of the plagues and disasters in the book, Revelation really is a joyful book, filled with songs and rejoicing. In the list below, I have counted as songs every section where the NIV has set the text apart visually from the narrative."

1. In Revelation 1.5b-6 John praises the God who saved us and made us a kingdom of priests.
2. In Revelation 4.8 the four living creatures praise God's holiness.
3. In Revelation 4.11 the 24 elders sing that God is worthy because he is the Creator.
4. In Revelation 5.9-10 the elders and the living creatures say that the Lamb is worthy because he is the Redeemer.
5. In Revelation 5.12 the angels, elders and living creatures exclaim that the Lamb is worthy.
6. In Revelation 5.13b every creature praises God and the Lamb.
7. In Revelation 5.14 every creature says Amen.
8. In Revelation 7.10 a great multitude sings that salvation belongs to God and the Lamb.
9. In Revelation 7.12 the angels ascribe praise, glory, etc to God.
10. In Revelation 11.15 heavenly voices say that the kingdom has passed to God and his Messiah.
11. In Revelation 11.17-18 the 24 elders thank God for reigning and for beginning to judge.
12. In Revelation 12.10-12 a heavenly voice calls the heavens to rejoice and the earth to lament, because the dragon has been thrown from heaven to earth.
13. In Revelation 14.3 the 144,000 receive a new song that only they know.
14. In Revelation 15.3-4 the ones who conquer sing about the works of God.
15. In Revelation 16.5-6 an angel sings that God is just for judging the persecutors of the saints
16. In Revelation 16.7b the martyrs exclaim that God is just.
17. In Revelation 18.2-3 an angel sings that Babylon has fallen.
18. In Revelation 18.4-7 a voice calls out for people to flee Babylon.
19. In Revelation 18.10 the kings of the earth sing a lament for Babylon.
20. In Revelation 18.16-17a the merchants sing a lament for Babylon.
21. In Revelation 18.19 the sailors and sea travelers sing a lament for Babylon.
22. In Revelation 18.20 someone (the author?) calls the saints and apostles to rejoice over Babylon.
23. In Revelation 18.21-24 a powerful angel sings that Babylon has fallen.
24. In Revelation 19.1b-3 the great multitude praises God for condemning Babylon.
25. In Revelation 19.4 the elders and living creatures sing Amen, Aleluia.
26. In Revelation 19.5 a voice from the throne calls God's servants to praise him.
27. In Revelation 19.6b-8 the great multitude praises because God reigns and the wedding supper of the Lamb has arrived.¹⁵

What an incredible way of reading the Revelation.

Now let us consider chapter 5.

FIRST, we will begin with the **SCROLL** (vv. 1-5).

"God, the creator, has a scroll in his right hand, like an architect with a rolled-up design for a building, or a general with a rolled-up plan of a campaign. The scroll is sealed with seven seals. We rightly guess, however, that it contains God's secret plan to undo and overthrow the world-

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destroying projects that have already gained so much ground, and to plant and nurture instead the world-rescuing project which will get creation itself back on track in the right direction.”¹⁶

From my perspective, I think the “Book” is the title deed to the Earth. He is reclaiming what is His by right and restoring the Earth back to the Garden. The scroll is the title deed to Creation. It is the title to the land. The deed claims/identifies ownership. Only Jesus can conquer and capture creation for the glory of God the Father. It is as this time every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2).

“The events which transpire following the loosing of the seals are directly related to Christ’s *inheritance*: [Psalm Ps. 2:1-3] describe[s] the rebellious world forces gathered together to try to prevent God’s Messiah from taking tenant possession or administration of the earth. [Psalm Ps. 2:7] records that when the Messiah confronts this challenge, He will declare what God has already decreed concerning Him: “Thou art my Son.” . . . the biblical term “son” involves the concept of “heir” (Gal. Gal. 4:7). Thus, as God’s Son, the Messiah is the heir of an inheritance given to Him by God. Psalm Ps. 2:8 presents God’s description of that inheritance: “I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”¹⁷

“His inheritance includes an enduring kingdom and the title deed to the earth (Ps. Ps. 2:6-8). “But what is this remarkable scroll? It is nothing less than the title deed to the earth itself. . . . it is clearly the antitype of all the rich typological teaching associated with the divinely specified procedures for land redemption in the Old Testament.” “The sealed scroll is the deed of purchase for mankind’s tenant possession inheritance or administration of the earth that was forfeited when mankind fell away from God. . . . a scroll deed of purchase was made when Christ paid the redemption price to redeem mankind’s tenant possession of the earth by shedding His blood on the cross.”¹⁸

The saints reigning over the earth is the same as Adam and Eve reigning over the Garden. The idea that the saints sit on thrones (4:4; 5:10) and reign goes back to humanity having **DOMINION** (Gen. 1:26, 28).

SECOND, we will consider the **LAMB** (vv. 6-7).

LAMB																					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
0	0	0	0	4	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	0	1	0	2		5	2

“THE LAMB”

The Lion from the tribe of Judah

The Root of David [cf. 22:16; Isaiah 11:1-10].

“Has overcome” (**nikao**). When did the Lamb overcome?

Cf. 1 Cor. 15:27, 28; Col. 2:14, 15; John 16:33

A Lamb standing (the language is intentional) = **was sitting** after the cross (“It is Finished” [Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1]) and **now stands** in Revelation (speaks of a readiness to act, “Come Lord Jesus”).

Seven Horns = Omnipotence

Seven Eyes = Omniscience

Seven Spirits = Omnipresence

“The two seem radically different. The victory won by the lion is accomplished through the sacrifice of the lamb, and in on other way. The victory won by the lamb is God’s lion like victory, through his faithful Israel-in-person, through his obedient humanity-in-person, overall the forces of corruption and death, over everything that would destroy and obliterate God’s good, powerful and lovely creation.”¹⁹

From my perspective, in His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus grabs the book and begins claiming the earth as His own (1 Cor. 15:27, 28). Thus, at **His resurrection and Pentecost**, Jesus began to reign. This does not cancel out the imagery of Rev. 19-22. There is still a point in time when He will return and set up Heaven on Earth.

If Pentecost inaugurates Him restoring the Earth back to the Garden, then Revelation 6:1 has already began.

“This combination of images creates two mind-boggling paradoxes. The first is that God shares sovereignty and honor, expressed in the receiving of worship, with the Messiah Jesus. The second is that this Jesus who is worthy of worship has exercised his messianic office and power by being slaughtered. His power is power in weakness, as Paul would put it (2 Cor. 12:9).”²⁰

THIRD, let us note the **PARTICIPANTS**.

A. A strong angel (v. 2)

- “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?’” (Rev. 5:2).
- “I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire” (Rev. 10:1).
- “Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer’” (Rev. 18:21).

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B. The twenty-four elders (vv. 4, 6, 8, etc.)

C. The four living creatures (vv. 6, 11)

D. Many angels (v. 11)

ANGELS																					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
2	4	4	0	2	0	3	10	5	6	2	2	0	8	4	8	2	2	1	1	3	3

Seventy-two verses have the word “angel” in it. Angels play a prominent role in the administration of God’s plan. Compare Revelation 5:13 with Philippians 2:9-11.

E. Every created thing (v. 13)

- ⁹“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands; ¹⁰and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb’” (Rev. 7:9, 10).
- “And he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues’” (Rev. 17:15).
- “After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God’” (Rev. 19:1).
- “Then I heard *something* like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns’” (Rev. 19:6).

Everything will one day come together in fulfillment of God’s overarching creation purpose.

1. The position they hold (v. 10)

- “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth” (Rev. 5:10).

2. The worship they offer (vv. 11-14)

FINALLY, we will HEAR the **SONG** (vv. 9-14).

Compare the different “songs” in chapters 4 and 5. What are their similarities?

Shepherding the Sheep: (What is the NEXT STEP?)

“And, if we are not either overwhelmed with the vision or exhausted with trying to understand it, we may glimpse here the most profound truth of all, which like everything else in chapters 4 and 5 continues to inform the whole of the rest of the book. The lamb shares the praise which belongs to the one and only God. This is John’s own way of glimpsing and communicating the mind-challenging but central truth at the heart of Christian faith: Jesus, the lion-lamb, Israel’s Messiah, the true man – this Jesus shares the worship which belongs, and uniquely and only belongs, to the one creator God.”²¹

At his news conference on the morning after the beginning of the 2003 attacks on Iraq, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was asked by a reporter “about the apparent failure to follow the war plan.” Rumsfeld replied dryly, “I don’t believe you have the war plan.” We often approach God with a question like the reporter’s – why doesn’t He follow the plan we expect? As God told Job and countless others since then, “I don’t believe you have the plan.”²²

THE BIG PICTURE

1. The world is theocentric.
2. Salvation from sin and death is found only in Christ Jesus the Lord.
3. All of creation worships Him.
4. In the person and work of Jesus, God fulfills the Garden Promise.

¹ <https://www.investopedia.com/financial-edge/1012/3-of-the-most-lucrative-land-deals-in-history.aspx>

² <http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=BZYuVSoYxtc%3D&tabid=206&mid=674>

³ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/revelation/revelation-5/revelation-5-1.html#30499E>

⁴ Wright, *Revelation*, 42, 43.

⁵ <http://www.truthistheword.com/the-structure-of-the-book-of-revelation/>

⁶ <https://bible.org/seriespage/revelation-4-5-0>

⁷ N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, 44.

⁸ Luther Poellot, *Revelation*, p. 81.

⁹ N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, 42.

¹⁰ <https://bible.org/seriespage/14-when-all-heaven-breaks-loose-revelation-5-1-14>

¹¹ Michael J. Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil worship and Witness following the Lamb into the New Creation*, 103.

¹² <http://sothl.com/2012/07/19/revelation-lesson-6-heavenly-worship-part-1/>

¹³ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/revelation/revelation-5/revelation-5-1.html#30499E>

¹⁴ N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, 45.

¹⁵ Mark S. Wilson, *Charts on the Book of Revelation*. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), pp. 74-75, augmented by the author’s personal study.

¹⁶ N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, 51, 52.

¹⁷ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/revelation/revelation-5/revelation-5-1.html#30499E>

Revelation 4 & 5

¹⁸ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/revelation/revelation-5/revelation-5-1.html#30499E>

¹⁹ N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, 553, 4.

²⁰ Gorman, *Revelation*, 103.

²¹ N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, 58.

²² Preaching Today Citation: Steve Johnson, “‘Little Things’ Add Up to Jumpy, But Compelling, News Coverage,” *Chicago Tribune* (3-21-03).