

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur Part IV: "The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter": Events After The Rapture Of The Church B. The Revelation Of Christ's Heavenly Glory Of Hope To The Church (Revelation 5:1-14)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

In today's world, many people are having a hard time hoping for a bright future:

(1) Local radio talk show host Brad Davis on The Talk of Connecticut broadcast last Monday told how the terrorist group, Hamas that Israel is fighting in Gaza, is reportedly set to begin receiving missiles from North Korea. A caller then telephoned to tell him, "The Bible talks about Armageddon, you know, so maybe we're headed there!"

Brad replied, "I sure hope not!"

(2) On Wednesday, Brad told how two women had spoken to him in a grocery store Tuesday of their dismay over world events and personal trials. One woman, with tears in her eyes, had said how afraid she was of the future.

Brad then told his audience, "I get this kind of feedback from all over these days -- I've never seen it like this!"

Need: Accordingly, we ask, "With today's widening sense of hopelessness about the future due to problems all over, IS there a workable hope for mankind and also for MY OWN future? IF so, how can I best prepare for it?!"

- I. After the Revelation 4 display of His glory, God the Father prepared to have all man's sins handled to establish His Kingdom of blessing, but no mortal was qualified to perform the assignment, Rev. 5:1-3:**
- A. John saw in the Father's right hand of sovereign power a "scroll" (*biblion*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 847; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 140) written **unusually on both its front and back** sides, recalling the Ezekiel 2:9-10 scroll that was full of God's prophesied judgments of woe, Revelation 5:1a.
- B. However, Revelation 5:1b-3 reveals no mortal was qualified to perform God's assigned judgment so that God's Messianic Kingdom of blessing could be established:
1. The scroll was fully sealed, noted in the 7 seals (Rev. 5:1c), and no mortal in heaven, on earth or under it could open the scroll or its seals or **even "see"** (*blepo* Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) the scroll, Rev. 5:2-3!
 2. The Rev. 5:3b verb "see" (*blepo*) **must** be used *figuratively*, because John, himself a mortal, could *literally* "see" (*oraō*, Ibid.) it in Rev. 5:1a, and that fact leads us to Matthew 13:13 where men **literally** "see" (*blepo*) while *figuratively NOT* "seeing" (*blepo*) in the sense of *spiritually understanding* what they "see" due to **God's hardening** of their minds in *judgment* (Ibid., p. 47; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 142-143).
 3. The fact that this Rev. 5 sealed book is not understood due to judgment in turn points us to Isaiah 29:1-13; there, God's prediction of His future deliverance of Jerusalem from Assyria's king Sennacherib's army [by slaying 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (Isaiah 37:36)] was "sealed" as unknowable by the prophets and people of Israel due to God's hardening of their minds in judgment of their false, man-made religion, Isaiah 29:13.
 4. This event had "eschatological overtones": it prefigured Christ's deliverance of Israel from her enemies in His Second Coming to prepare for His Messianic Kingdom, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1078-1079.
 5. Thus, God's Rev. 5:1 scroll of judgment for the world to prepare for His Kingdom stood unknowable and blocked in His judging blindness of all men as all had strayed from Him, Romans 1:18-3:20; Isaiah 53:6a!
- II. Due to man's helplessness under God's condemnation to handle his wrongs and see God's Kingdom set up, John wept very much, Rev. 5:4; B. K. C., N. T., p. 945. John's imprisonment for Christ on Patmos (Rev. 1:9) and his witness of many martyrdoms of Christians by Emperor Domitian (A. D. 81-96), if not justly addressed, left John and the Church of all men the most to be pitied as they would then have hope only in their earthly life, 1 Cor. 15:19. John thus expressed the grief of a man in utter hopelessness!**
- III. However, Jesus Christ entered the scene as man's SAVIOR to fulfill the Father's will, Revelation 5:4-7:**
- A. To comfort John, one of the 24 elders, a believer in the raptured Church, told him to stop weeping, for the "Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David" had overcome to open the book and its seals, Revelation 5:4:
1. The "Lion of the tribe of Judah" recalls Jacob's Genesis 49:8-12 prediction of Christ's arrival in Judah's line, and the *blessings* of His **Kingdom** for **ISRAEL**; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Gen. 49:8-12.
 2. Similarly, "the Root of David" recalls the Isaiah 11:10 prediction of Christ's coming as that Root when He will be a rallying banner *for* the **GENTILES**, and that His "*rest*" of the **Kingdom** "shall be *glorious*"!
 3. Thus, Messiah Jesus has overcome the sin issue for Jew and Gentile to save them from God's condemnation, to judge the unrepentant wicked and to pave the way for the blessed Messianic Kingdom!

- B. Just **how** this victory of access to God's Kingdom for **Jew and Gentile** was **obtained** is clarified in Rev. 5:6-7:
1. John saw in the midst of the throne, the cherubs and the elders a "little lamb" (*arnion*, the diminutive form of *aren*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 848; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 107) that was **slain** (Rev. 5:6a), a reference to the Lamb of God, the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:29; 19:17-21:25) Who is spiritually in intimate fellowship with the Father, the holy angels and the raptured Church (John 17:20-24), and **the only other Bible context where such a "little lamb" was sacrificed, resulting in a great, lasting deliverance from oppression in sin, is 1 Samuel 7:3-15**. There, when Israel repented of her sin of idolatry and asked Samuel to pray for deliverance from the Philistines, Samuel sacrificed a little nursing lamb and called unto God for deliverance. God answered Samuel, sending a big thunderstorm to rout the Philistines, and Israel retrieved the cities the Philistines had seized from her while God kept opposing the Philistines so that they stopped afflicting Israel as long as Samuel judged Israel! Likewise, Jesus' death for Jews and Gentiles who believe in Him so fully conquers their sin and their evil foes that God can establish for them His Messianic Kingdom of great deliverance from sin and oppression with enormous, lasting blessing!
 2. The 7 horns represent Christ's omnipotence as God and His 7 eyes His omniscience as also seen in the indwelling Holy Spirit of God in the Messiah, Zech. 4:10; Isaiah 11:1-2. (Rev. 5:6b) So, having produced His atonement as **once-for-all slain** (*esphagmenon* = perf. pass. of *sphazo*, "slay," Ibid., Arndt & Ging., p. 803; The Anal. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 169), Christ in full deity came and **once-for-all took** (*eilephen* = perf. of *lambano*, "take," Ibid., Arndt & Ging., p. 465-466; Ibid., The Anal. Grk. Lex., p. 117) the book from the Father's hand, prepared in infinite ability **once-for-all to judge and establish His Kingdom**, Rev. 5:7!

IV. Jesus Christ's entrance and act was greeted with great praise and worship from all creation, Rev. 5:8-14:

- A. Christ's taking of the book from the Father's hand was met with the worship and adoration of the cherubs and the raptured Church, the elders, who fell down before the "lamb," the glorified Lord Jesus Christ, with music and prayer, with the elders singing a "new" song (Rev. 5:8-9a). As in Psalm 40:1-3, they sang a testimony of God's deliverance from an horrible pit, from the miry clay unto a firm rock with a new song of praise to God!
- B. Thus, the raptured Church testified of Christ's salvation by His death from every tribe, tongue, people and nation, to be made kings and priests (Rev. 1:5-6) to rule on the earth in the Messianic Kingdom, Rev. 5:9b-10.
- C. After this, countless angels about the throne, the cherubs and elders said in a loud voice that Christ was worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing, Rev. 5:11-12. All but glory and wisdom in this list are items named in David's 1 Chr. 29:10-13 dedicatory prayer as items God gives to a Davidic king, and Solomon received wisdom from God in 1 Kings 3:4-15, while glory belongs to God (1 Chr. 29:11). Since Jesus Christ is both the Davidic Messiah and God Incarnate, He is here lauded as worthy of both sets of items!
- D. John then heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth and on and in the sea saying, "Blessing, honor, glory and power" be to God the Father and to Christ the "Lamb" forever and ever, Revelation 5:13.
- E. The four holy cherubs around the throne then said, "Amen," and the raptured Church, the 24 elders, fell down and worshipped God Who lives forever and ever, Revelation 5:14.

Lesson: *When Christ takes His true Church to heaven in the rapture, we Christians will be deeply moved by the revelation of the redemption that was wrought by Christ at the Father's directive, for we will see it fully equips the Lord to handle all sin and its harmful effects in the universe and to provide us full, eternal relief and blessing.*

Application: *May we (1) trust in Christ to have eternal life and be able to participate in an eternity of blessing in Him, John 3:16. (2) As believers, may we serve the Lord in obeying His assignments in a fallen, hopeless world in preparation for eternity, discipling all men to become subjects of His future Messianic Kingdom of great blessing.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In our introduction, we told how a caller to a radio talk show feared we might be headed for Armageddon.

The radio host had replied, "I sure hope not!", so it would be edifying to make a Biblical comment on that subject. Though the Bible **does** predict the battle of Armageddon, we know it will occur **after** the Church is **raptured**, after Christ takes us to heaven as typified in Revelation 4:1-2. Armageddon occurs in Revelation 19:19-21 after the world prepares for it in Revelation 16:12-16 upon being deceived by demons to get involved in that war.

(1) Thus, we need to trust in Christ as Savior from sin to have eternal life and escape the coming Great Tribulation. (2) Then, we need to live in HOPE by preparing to meet Him in glory, staying occupied with His personal assignments for us on earth to disciple others with what time we have left!