

A Worthy is the Lamb

3ofEaster

Pastor Josh Frazee

Rev. 5:8-14

Grace, peace, and mercy be to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Last week we considered what this life is all about: who we are as God’s children, how we became His children through the washing of Holy Baptism, and how we know that truth from His Word. This week we continue considering what this life is all about, pondering the questions What is Power? and What is Good? in view of our epistle text from Revelation chapter five.

In our text from Revelation, St. John writes that the Lamb is the only one “worthy” of “blessing and honor and glory and might [which could also be rendered “power”] forever and ever!” Today, then, we will look at why the Lamb is worthy of this Power, as well as what is Good and why.

Verse 1

Starting just a couple verses before our text, St. John wrote: “between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.’”

Here we hear about the vision that John had. He was taken up into heaven to the throne room of God; and here, he beheld the Lamb of God coming into it. It was a Lamb looking as though it had been slain. And indeed, in their song, the four living creatures and the elders praise the Lamb, the one who had been “slain.” Later in the epistle of Revelation, an angel will promptly correct John for desiring to worship him, instead pointing him to worship only God. Here, these creatures and elders are worshipping this Lamb. Since they are not rebuked for this, it is right to perceive that the Lamb is God. Yet God is also seated on the throne. So who are these? The One seated on the throne is the Father, and the Lamb is, of course, Jesus, who had been slain as the Lamb of God, the one who takes away the sin of the world.

And “worthy” is He—the Lamb who is Jesus Christ the Lord. He is worthy because He was “slain.” So Jesus is worthy to receive “blessing and honor and glory and might [that is, power] forever and ever” because He was slain to take away the sin of the world. Yet, which Power is He given? He is given all Power, including the Power to break the seven seals on the scroll He had received from the Father.

Those gathered in heaven sing and acknowledge that Jesus is the one worthy of these things; but do you acknowledge this as well? Are you willing to submit to the Lamb who died for your sins? Do you trust that He will manage all Power well? Do you trust that He will handle it well in leading you into the future?

Verse 2

“Then I [John] looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is

the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

Yes the full company of heaven proclaimed at the time of John, and still proclaims today that Jesus, the Lamb of God, is worthy of all Power, and all these other great things. It is He that they trust to lead them into the future, because they know that future is secure and perfect in Him. They know that the future will be Good with Him—and so they claim that He is worthy to break the seven seals, whatever they may bring.

Do you trust that the Lamb of God is leading you into a Good future? Even as He opens the seven seals—whatever they may bring? Of our old selves, we could never trust the Lamb Jesus or God or anyone other than ourselves. But we are no longer our old selves. As we heard last weekend, we are new creations. We have been made new people in our Lord Christ Jesus. He has called us by His Word and at our baptism to be His. And we know that He wants us to be His because He died for us.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, took on our own human flesh. He lived among us. He taught among us. And He died by our hand. Yet the worst suffering He had was the suffering that justice gave—He took hell itself, on the cross, in your place and mine, so that neither I nor you would have to.

So we can say and sing along with the full company of heaven “Worthy is the Lamb”! He is worthy of our trust, our love, and to have all the Power, and to have our trust that He is leading us to Good things in the future.

Verse 3

“And I [John] heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!’ And the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ and the elders fell down and worshipped.”

Indeed, every living creature proclaims that the Lamb is worthy of all: those in the sea, on the land, on the earth, and those living souls in heaven. Because He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him, all are alive—even those who believe in the Lamb and are dead to this world are alive before the throne of God—God the Father who sits on the throne, and God the Lamb, God the Son, Jesus Christ, who is seated at His right hand.

And Jesus will bring the future to us. He is opening the seven seals of the End Times. We do not know when the End will be, but we know that we are God’s children by means of His Word and baptism and by receiving His Supper; we know that Jesus holds all the Power and that in Him, the End will be the most Good that anything ever has been or will be.

So with those in the sea and on the land and on the earth and throughout the heavens, we sing and proclaim “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain”! And with the four living creatures we can say, “Amen!” and with the elders we can fall down and worship the Lamb of God—even Jesus Christ. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

