

In the midst of the Throne

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[0 : 00] The book of Revelation chapter 5 and we may read again at verse 6. Revelation chapter 5 and reading at verse 6.

And I beheld and lo in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb, having every one of them heart and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take in the book and to open the seals thereof. For thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.

And especially the words in verse 6. In the midst of the throne stood a lamb as it had been slain.

[1 : 33] Do you remember how in the Old Testament, in the account that we are given of Abraham being called upon to offer Isaac his son upon the altar, that when they were on the way to the place of sacrifice, the young man asked his father a pathetic question.

He said, Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham replied, perhaps more wisely than he knew, God himself will provide a lamb, my son.

Now the apostle John, who was the author of the book of Revelation, was one of two men who heard John the Baptist speak as he pointed to Christ, saying, Behold, the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Now John was the beloved disciple. He had an intimate knowledge of his Lord.

John had seen the Savior being led as a lamb to the slaughter. And so this idea was indelibly fixed upon his mind, Jesus Christ, the lamb of God.

[3 : 25] And in his last days, on the island of Patmos, the beloved disciple was to see this Christ under the same figure of the lamb as the great revealer of secret, expounding the mind of God, taking the sealed book and loosing those seals which bound up the mysterious purposes of God towards the children of men.

I saw a lamb in the midst of the throne, a lamb as it had been slain. In covenanting days, it is related that a father took his little boy of 11 years of age to hear one of the Erskine streets.

The text that morning was, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. And that little boy beheld the lamb with the eye of faith.

His name was Thomas Boston. And his memory is fragrant in Scotland today. After that wonderful ministry, and it is said that in his last days, when he was no longer able to ascend the pulpit, he asked that his beloved people would be gathered around the front of the man and there propped up on his bed.

He gave them his last message. And this was his text. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

[5 : 37] And a few hours afterwards, Thomas Boston passed away to be forever with the Lamb.

So friends, as we would seek to meditate on this text this morning, we would like to notice, first of all, the position of the Lamb.

the position of the Lamb. I saw a Lamb in the midst of the throne. In the midst of the throne.

The Lamb is the center of that wonderful circle that makes up the fellowship of heaven. Christ is the center of all in the midst of the throne.

Now this at once arrests our attention. We remember the words of Samuel Rutherford as they were put into verse by Mrs. Cousins.

[6 : 48] The King there in his beauty without avail is seen. It were a well-spent journey those seven deaths lay between.

The Lamb with his fair army doth on Mount Zion stand. And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

The bride eyes not her garment but her dear bridegroom's face. I will not gaze at glory but on the King of grace.

not at the crown he gifteth but at his pierced hand. For the Lamb is all the glory in Emmanuel's land. And John says I beheld a Lamb as it had been slain. Now that speaks to us of atonement of the cross.

[7 : 55] At the Passover there was the slain Lamb. And you remember how God said to Moses concerning his people when he commanded that the blood of the Lamb would be sprinkled upon the doorposts and the lintels of the houses.

God said when I see the blood I will pass over you. I saw a Lamb in the midst of the throne and here is the song of victory for the theme of the song of the redeemed is this worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

Worthy is the Lamb. I saw a Lamb in the midst of the throne. Now the throne is the seat of authority. Even in our own country when Parliament passes a bill that bill cannot become law until it receives the royal assent.

The throne is the seat of power and it was because our Lord humbled himself that he was exalted being found in fashion as a man wrote Paul to the Philippian church being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even unto the death of the cross.

[9 : 48] Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every time confess to the glory of God the Father that Jesus Christ is Lord he is highly exalted and the teaching of this passage is that our Lord Jesus Christ in his sacrificial character is the most prominent object in the heavenly world he who became alarmed that he might take away sin is not ashamed of his humiliation John John tells us that in the glory our Lord bears in his hand the print of the nails

Christ in his sacrificial character is the glory of heaven now there are some people today who tell us that it is only the life of our Lord Jesus Christ that should be proclaimed and that no prominence should be given to his death but that is not the religion of the Bible and we are not ashamed to preach the Lord Jesus in his death as the one great sacrifice for sin the apostle Paul wrote God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ my Lord and his atoning sacrifice is the reason for the greatest reverence and the highest adoration of the redeemed before the throne hark how the adoring hosts above with songs surround the throne ten thousand thousand are their tongues but all their hearts are one worthy the Lamb that died they cry to be exalted thus worthy the Lamb let us reply for he was slain for us but then also friends let us think of the power of the Lamb the power of the Lamb I saw a Lamb as it had been slain standing in the midst of the throne he stood in the midst of the throne I am he that was dead and behold I am alive forever more Christ is our living savior for standing is the posture of life and surely then our view of Christ should be twofold we should see him both in his death and in his risen life if we only see him on the cross we behold the power of his death but he is no longer on the cross he forever lives to make intercession for us and we need to know him in the power of his risen life that all may know him said Paul in the power of his resurrection in the power of his risen life we have to see him both in his death and in his life not in the one without the other you remember when the apostle

Paul preached in Athens to the wise philosophers we are told he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection Jesus and the resurrection it is said of Dr.

F. B. Meyer that great English preacher of a past day that one day the thought came to him in his study Christ is alive he is real he is present with me now and it is said that experience transformed his whole ministry no man was found worthy to open the book nor to unloose the seals thereof ah but the Lord usually appears when all other hope is gone no man was found worthy to open the book and you remember how the Messiah speaks in the prophecy of Isaiah I have trodden the wine press alone and of the people there was none with me who is worthy to open the book and to unloose the seals at all he who appeared to take away the sin of the world now appears to take away the seals that bind up the eternal purposes of God the Lamb of God is able to do what no

other may dare to attempt

[16 : 23] Jesus said you remember no man knoweth the father but the son and he to whomsoever the son shall reveal him and when his disciples asked our Lord of the day of his coming you remember his answer it is not for you to know the times or the seasons that the father have placed in his own power there are mysteries that are not revealed to us not till the loom is silent and the shuttle cease to fly will God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why the dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned ah but my friend remember this that when no man can comfort you when no man can save you then you may expect the Lord the ever sympathetic

Lamb of God to appear on your behalf John said I wept much I wept much because no man was found worthy to open the book nor to unloose the seals thereof it was Spurgeon who said that eyes that are washed by repentance are best able to see those blessed truths which shine from the Lamb of God the great sin bearer there is an old English proverb which says there is no going to heaven but by weeping cross and there seems no way of seeing heaven or the heavenly one except by eyes that have wept they looked unto him said the psalmist and they were lightened and their faces were not ashamed but then friends we notice finally in our text the praises of the Lamb the praises of the Lamb now in the scriptures generally speaking the figure seven is the number of perfection and we're told of our Lord that he was anointed by the spirit without measure remember how the psalmist said of the Messiah that with my holy oil my king I have anointed him to be his hand and power shall reach afar I'll set it in the sea and his right hand established shall in the rivers be worthy is the

Lamb that is the song of heaven worthy is the Lamb that was slain and has redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation worthy is the Lamb he is universally adored universally adored and you remember how the apostle Paul tells us that when he comes when he comes in glory every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God the Father that Jesus Christ is Lord ah there are many who will reverence him when he comes in glory every knee shall bow even those of his enemies in that day when he shall take to himself his great power and reign ah but that is not the worship that our Lord accepts that is not the worship that proves that the offerer is saved ah no we must worship him as our sacrifice we must adore him in his lowly character as the despised and the rejected of men we must reverence him when the many ridicule him ah yes friend the gospel calls upon you to accept him as your substitute to see him as the atoning sacrifice here in his love said John here in his love not that we love God but that he loved us and gave his son to be the propitiation for our sins the propitiation that which turns away the wrath of

[22 : 43] God from the sinner the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world in heaven the company of the redeemed worship Jesus as the lamb they worship him as the lamb that was slain and the adoration begins with the church when he had taken the book the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb having every one of them harps and gold and vials full of odors which are the prayers of saints they worship him both in prayer and in praise he is exalted in his human nature he is worshipped in the glory by the myriads of angels indeed by all creation he is acknowledged as lord lord now dear friend if the sacrifice of christ be thought so much of in heaven cannot you trust him now when you think of the song of the redeemed not unto us lord not unto us be the glory but unto thy name think of that glorious company of heaven the great multitude that no man can number and there is not one among them but acknowledges that salvation is of the lord that all their hope was in the finished work of christ they would all say with the psalmist i will make mention of thy righteousness not my righteousness not my goodness not my attempts to fulfill the law i will make mention of thy righteousness even of thine only robert murray mccane said the robes of christ righteousness are more precious than those which sinless angels wear because although the angels have a god given righteousness it was not purchased for them at such a tremendous cost you were redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold but with the precious blood of christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot our friend look to him look to him who is the one bears the burden of sin the sin bearing lamb behold the lamb of god that taketh away the sin of the world he is in the midst of the throne in the seat of authority he is able to save unto the uttermost all them that come unto god by him because he ever lives to make

intercession for them he is a living saviour he upholds his people by his power of those that thou gavest me I have lost none they are kept kept by the power of god unto salvation after this I beheld and lo there stood in the midst of the throne a lamb as it had been slain with a law bless or meditation on his word let us pray we rejoice O Lord that thou art exalted in glory thou hast led captivity captive thou hast received gifts for men even for rebels that god himself might dwell in their midst

O gracious Lord give us a sight of the throne give us to realize that thou hast vanquished all the principalities and powers of hell and hast made a show of them openly that Christ reigns and O blessed Lord encourage thy people at this time grant to enable them to renew their vows in thy presence grant O Lord that as they gather at thy table that the lamb may be the center of their affection O give them give them Lord a new realization of his glory and grant that our eyes may gaze upon his person that

Jesus himself may be our all in all and O Lord grant that through grace our lives may give testimony that we belong to him that it may be said of us in truth as it was said of Lazarus of Bethany he was one of them that sat at the table with him and O do thou grant then Lord to us that as we go forth into the world it may be evident to those who are without thy church that we belong to Jesus O Lord keep us by thy power enable us to adorn thy doctrine in all things and make us to be a fragrance of Christ in every place remember Lord any who are at thy table today for the last time if that be the case with any of us

Lord may it be a foretaste of the table above bring us into the banqueting hall may thy banner over us beloved and grant Lord that we may be resolved to bear our testimony to the world to say to our fellow men come come and I'll tell what the Lord has done for my soul gracious spirit guide us in the further part of this solemn service and make all things redound to thy glory and to the blessing of thy dear children and forgive us Lord the iniquity of our holy things for Christ's sake Amen shall we sing again to God's praise this time from

[31 : 13] Psalm 116 Psalm 116 from verse 13 the tune is Cunningham number 48 Psalm 116 from verse 13 Isle of salvation take the cup on God's name will I call I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all dear in God's sight is his saints death thy servant Lord am I thy servant sure thine handmaid son my bands thou didst untie thank offerings I to thee will give and on God's name will call I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all within the courts of God's own house within the midst of thee

O city of Jerusalem praise to the Lord give ye let me sing these stanzas to God's praise Psalm 116 at verse 13 the tune is Cunningham Isle of Salvation take the cup Isle of salvation make the heart of the world and the world shall face the heart of theance on the heart isle of the love and the heart The Huh?

Yeah. Yeah.

I'll take some time. I'll take time to thee we'll give, and what's on him will hold.

I'll take my plans and go, my Lord, before it be found.

[34 : 08] Within the course of God, O God, within the midst of me, O Spirit of the Lord, with your Lord, your King.

Now, friends, we come to that part of our service, which is known in our church as the fencing of the table. And in order to assist us in our duty, we will read a passage of Scripture in the epistle of Paul to the Galatians, chapter 5, and reading at verse 16.

Galatians, chapter 5, at verse 16. This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would.

But if you be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

[36 : 15] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Now friends, in this passage, we have clearly set before us two classes of people, those who walk after the flesh, that is, those who have no personal knowledge of Christ, who are living as a world in rebellion against God.

and then there are the Lord's people, those who walk in the Spirit. Now there is a distinction between the gospel call and the invitation to the Lord's table.

gospel call. The gospel call is addressed to all men and women, to every boy and girl without exception. this is one of the causes for rejoicing to the preacher of the gospel, to know that there is no one to whom we may not say, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

[38 : 17] the gospel message is addressed indiscriminately to all. For our Master's commission to the church is, go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

But then, the invitation to the Lord's table is not an indiscriminate invitation. It is not addressed to all without exception.

No, the invitation to the Lord's people is to the Lord's people, to those that love him, to those who by grace have turned from sin unto God, to those who acknowledge that all their hope of heaven is in Christ, in the finished work of Calvary.

This invitation is to those who are the children of God. It is their privilege, the children, the covenant children, and they have a share in the feast of commemoration.

Do you remember how the Apostle Paul commended certain Christians at Thessalonica where he said that they gave themselves to the Lord and then unto us by the will of God.

[40 : 01] That is the scriptural order. First they came to a saving knowledge of Christ and it was then and only then that they were publicly associated with the church.

They gave themselves first of all to the Lord and then unto us by the will of God. and in this passage that we read together the Apostle speaks of the works of the flesh the things that men do according to their sinful nature and what an ugly cluster there is here these evil things adultery fornication uncleanness idolatry hatred strife seditions heresies envying murders drunkenness revelings and he says I tell you as I've often told you that those who do such things those who deliberately go on in sin those who are rejecting God's commandments they shall not inherit the kingdom of God those who are deliberately going on in sin they have no portion no portion in the feast of commemoration this table is not for them for to such as go on in sin to sit at the Lord's table can only bring upon them condemnation the wrath of God this table is for the Lord's people and then you see the fruit of which

Paul says that it is the fruit of the Spirit the fruit of the Spirit oh what lovely words we have here love and joy and peace and long suffering and gentleness goodness faith meekness temper and self control what a beautiful set of virtues the fruit of the Spirit but perhaps when we look at ourselves we are inclined to conclude that there is very little of this fruit in our cells this is a cause of grief to us that we feel that we have so little of the fruit of the Spirit but no man has all the fruit and no one has the fruit of the

Spirit in perfection but the believer the child of God has something of the fruit of the Spirit something of the fruit and we are longing that we will come to maturity that the fruit of the Spirit will be more and more evident in our lives that our heavenly Father may be glorified now our fathers believed in this fencing of the table because they regarded the Lord's table as a sacred place it belongs to the Lord's people to those who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ and who are seeking by grace to walk in his way and to render a willing obedience to all his priests and for those who have no love for Christ and no desire to walk in the way of holiness holiness well they are excluded from his table it is the Lord's table for the Lord's people it is the Lord's provision for us that we may feed upon him by faith that we may grow in the knowledge of Christ that we may advance in the way of holiness oh may he bless our gathering at his table and grant that as we partake of the bread and the wine it may not be a mere formality to anything in the way in youtube and everyone believe me has to do a thing not to spit and and in hell other goods are so good let the other ingredients in the room