

The Lamb on the throne

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[0:00] Oh yes, it's understanding the Bible together. So it's not just one person telling you what it means, we commit ourselves to the teaching of your holy word.

We come asking the forgiveness of our sins because we know that we're still in the flesh in some sense and that is the flesh wants to go in the opposite direction to your word and the opposite direction to faith and the flesh wants to be selfish and the flesh doesn't want to be holy and we are still in conflict with the flesh even though you have given us new hearts.

So we pray, Lord, first of all for your forgiveness that we might not come this evening just unprepared or uncleansed but rather to pray for the application of the blood of Jesus Christ to us in its power and freshness to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and we pray, Heavenly Father, for the presence of the Holy Spirit that he might be our teacher that we might do what it says here to hear what the Spirit says to the churches and that we might hear what you're saying to us and we do particularly pray that we won't be simply trying to solve conundrums or just to be fascinated by features of a piece of literature but rather that we would be people who are wanting to live by the word of God and wanting your word to impact upon us and to keep us walking in the Christian life and to even sanctify us to make us more like the Lord Jesus not just for an hour on a Sunday but all through our lives and this we desperately need and we ask this of you as we meet together tonight in Jesus' name, Amen

Amen So my first proposal is that we read chapters 4 and 5 And how would you feel about doing what we sometimes do on a Wednesday which is to read one verse each and just go all the way through I don't know whether everybody will get a chance to read a verse The proviso is if you're not happy to do that for any reason whatsoever you just nudge the person next to you and they can do the reading and carry it on So we have a microphone So we're going to read God's word We're going to read In a moment we will read in chapter 4 But maybe it would be a good idea just to remind ourselves of where we've got to in the previous chapters Click, click, click No What does Daniel do when it doesn't work?

[4:15] That's on the side Let me close the back Okay, thank you So just to say we're going to be looking at chapters 4 and 5 But first of all let's look at where we've got to so far The book of Revelation is a book in the Bible It's for our edification and for our survival and progress as Christians It is called Revelation The word in Greek is apokalypsis which means taking away a veil And I think it's a very helpful idea It says we can see a veil or a curtain Have we got a veil or a curtain?

Not as such But we've got this We can see on the surface of things But if you take away the veil you can see what was going on behind And I think that's a helpful idea for the book of Revelation There's lots of things that we can see But our normal eye is that everybody can see But the book of Revelation shows us what's going on behind What's really happening The truth behind the appearance It is in the form of a letter And a letter in its nature has relevance to the people receiving it So that is a helpful perspective on the book It must have meant something to the people who were receiving it It's not everything so far distant You know, telling us what will happen in the Reformation Or telling us what will happen in the common market As people used to say it was talking about That would be not particularly relevant to the original readers

So in the form of a letter means that it is It has relevance to the original readers How many churches were there? Six That's correct And it's also in the form of a prophecy And I put on here It's telling them what's going to happen It's certainly telling us what's going to happen It says that Prophecy in the Bible Tends to include the idea Of a spiritual or theological analysis Of where we're

at In the light of God's big purposes And what we should be doing about it now So prophecy isn't just giving you tomorrow's newspaper today It is saying this is how, where we are in God's plan And this is how we should behave And that's, I think that will be true of this book The behavioral implications of the big picture One of the things that I'm quite keen on

Is listening to his accent The way he speaks And just to bore you with my example of this Dear Pastor Stuart McNary at Holland Road Used to preach about fiat Because he was from Northern Ireland Fiat And for months his congregation Or members of his congregation Had no idea what he was talking about Because of his Northern Irish accent Fiat from Northern Ireland is faith Fiat So he was saying you need to walk by faith Faith You have to understand his accent, you see And we need to understand John's accent And we can pick this up Just by listening to him Because that's how you pick up on an accent, isn't it?

And we're going to revisit that And I've put a blank space there To put some things about the accent What do we find in the book of Revelation? We find beasts In particular, two beasts We find trumpets How many trumpets?

[8:20] There are seven trumpets There's perhaps more than seven But there are at least seven Whoops And we have this beautiful lady Who did I have in mind when I...

The bride Yeah, the hair's the wrong colour And then we have this lady Who is the counterpart The bad...

The prostitute Yes, the whore The prostitute And we have corresponding cities That's the city with the tower That reaches up Which is...

Babylon Babylon Babylon And we have this city Which is the opposite of... Jerusalem Jerusalem Yeah, the new Jerusalem And we have this lampstand With how many lamps on it?

Seven Which takes its origin from where? From the Jewish... In the tabernacle There would be a seven-branched lampstand But that idea of bearing light In a dark place Attaches itself to the idea Of believing communities That spread light And in this case The seven lamps are...

[9:37] We're told they are the... The seven churches And we have some of these Which we're going to do God willing next time Yeah, the horsemen Do you know how many of those there are?

There are four horsemen of the apocalypse Yep They're modelled on the horsemen That used to ride In the days of the Persian Empire I think it's the Persian Empire And we have one of those Right in the throne Yep And we have one of those A dragon or a serpent Representing the adversary And we have one of these A lamb Yep And the lamb representing Jesus Christ Yeah And I asked this question last time What sums up this picture?

Would you give one word That sums that up? Julia did Pardon We've got...

You'll notice you've got opposites You've got the bride versus the whore You've got Babylon versus Jerusalem You've got the lamb versus the battle Yeah, conflict I think is what I came down with So we looked at the seven churches The seven lampstands Didn't that?

And those are... There they are by name Perhaps worth giving the context There they are geographically And if you want to know which one's which I think I've put some arrows And they are listed in the order That a messenger would take them Starting at one Going round and round and round And we have this interesting feature At the beginning That there are...

[11:34] Or the letter is addressed To seven individual churches But each of the churches Can hear what's being said To the other churches And I guess that's a principle Of listening to it None of the churches It doesn't say to Calvary Evangelical Church Brighton But we can listen to what is said To other churches And say well to what extent Would that be true of us?

Just as they would say As they read it To what extent would that be true of us? To what extent should we take the warnings That they are offered? To what extent should we lay hold On the promises That are offered to them?

And of course When you look at it that way There's a lot that we can engage with I mean it doesn't mean It doesn't mean to say That we're guilty of every sin That was pointed out there But there's always something We can take notice of And say well that's something To avoid etc. etc.

And it is said For example In 3 verse 22 Whoever has ears Let them hear What the Spirit says to the churches Very reminiscent of what Jesus said In the parables isn't it?

He who has ears to hear Let him hear And that calls for a sort of Active engagement Doesn't it? We don't sit back and say Well it's nothing to do with us We say well what is there in there That I need to take away?

[12:56] What should I be taking notice of? And just to go a little bit further With context The context of this Is the Roman Empire And there are a number of features of that Which I've listed there The Pax Romana The Roman peace Which enabled transport and travel And communication You know what have the Romans Ever done for us?

Peace Trade And trade brings money And money is a thing Which we'll find out Conquest and force A little bit like those riders Cities Rome The great city But it's a city Run by soldiers And emperors And it's a bit like Babylon In many ways There's The cult of emperor worship Is coming in As this book is written There is a tipping From other parts of the New Testament Where the main opposition To the gospel Was the Jews So we had that this morning Didn't we?

That the Jews Tried to kill The apostle Paul Because he was Sort of betraying Their heritage But As we go on in history The main opposition Flips over to the state And the emperor And emperor worship Was coming in Rome Was notorious In The What should we say The promiscuity And immorality In the area of sex And in the area of religion There were many gods It was polytheistic And people would bow down To idols And if you're walking The street You would be seeing Priests And Oh I can't remember Why I put that there I think it's probably Yes that's right The goddess of Rome Was Roma And we will find Later on A picture A vision Very similar To this Of this Very similar To that woman

And So if we think About the context Of it We think How much of that Is like Our situation Well it's actually Not so different Is it In the west We currently Have peace I don't think We're entitled to it But we certainly Have it at the moment By and large With trade And money Comes the Attractions And temptations Of affluence And that's certainly There in the book Of revelation We would be mistaken If we said The only thing That was a threat Was persecution Another thing That is a threat Is Placing Your Life In the hands Of the wrong God And another thing That's a threat Is luxury So we'll notice That as we go along It's not I'm saying We're not that different Conquest and force Perhaps not so much In the west Not so much persecution But Certainly in terms Of sexual Ethics We've slid A long way Haven't we From The sort of Puritanism Which might have Been the case I don't know In the 1900s Or whatever it was We have pornography So readily available And As you know The sort of Same sex issues Are Very prevalent In our society So we're not In many ways We're not that different We face Very similar Issues And This Is getting on To the next What we're going To do When we've read So That just Reminds us Of the context Of it Of course Probably worth Saying that So now Let's read Chapters 4 And 5 And we're going To read Round like that And somewhere Like this And we'll Try and read Both chapters So please Then as I Looked I saw a door

[17:16] Standing open In heaven And the same Voice I had Heard before Spoke to me Like a trumpet Blast The voice Said Come up here And I will Show you What must Happen After this At once I was in the Spirit And there Before me Was a throne In heaven With someone Sitting on it And the one Who sat there Had the appearance Of Jasper And Cornelian A rainbow Resembling an Emerald Encircled the Throne Around the Throne Were 24 Thrones And on the Thrones I saw 24 elders Sitting Clothed in White robes And they Had crowns Of gold On their Heads From the Throne Came flashes Of lightning Rumbblings And peals Of thunder Before the Throne Seven lamps Were blazing These are the

Seven spirits Of God Also before The throne There was What looked Like a Sea of Glass Clear as Crystal In the Centre Around the Throne Were four Living creatures And they Were covered With eyes In front And behind The first Living creature Was like A lion The second Was like An ox The third Had a face Like a man The fourth Was like A flying eagle Each of the Four living Creatures Had six Wings And was Covered With eyes All around Even under The wings Day and night They never Stopped Saying Holy Holy Holy Is the Lord God Almighty Who was And is And is To come Whenever The living Creatures Give glory Honor And thanks To him Who sits On the Throne And who Lives Forever And ever The

Twenty-four Elders Fall down Before him And who Sits In the Throne And worship Him Who lives Forever And ever They lay Their Crowns Before The Throne And say You are Worthy Our Lord And God To receive Glory And honor And power For you Created All things And by Your will They were Created And have Their Being Then 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 And I Saw a Strong angel Proclaiming With a Loud voice Who is Worthy To open The book And to Lose The seals Thereof But no

One in Heaven Or on Earth Or under The earth Could open The scroll Or even Look inside It I Wept And Wept Because No one Was found Who was Worthy To open The scroll Or look Inside 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 He Is Able To open The scroll And its Seven Seals Then I Saw A lamb Looking As if It Had Been Slain Standing At The Center Of The Throne Encircled By the Four Living Creatures And The Elders The Lamb Had Seven Horns And Seven Eyes Which Are The Seven Spirits Of And When He Took The Scroll The Four Living Beings And The Twenty Four Elders Fell Down Before The Lamb Each One Had A Harp And They Held Gold Bowls Filled With Incense Which Are The Prayers Of God's People 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 You Have Made Them To Be A Kingdom And Priests To Serve Our God And They Will Reign On The Earth And Then I Looked And I Heard The Voice Of Many Angels Around The Throne The Living Creatures And The Elders And The Number Of Them Was Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand And Thousands Of

[22:34] Thousands 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 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 Forever And Ever The Four Living Creatures Said Amen And The Elders Fell Down And Worshipped Amen That is A Tremendous Text Isn't It And You Will Be Pleased To Know That There Is A Blessing On The One Who Reads Aloud The Words Of This Prophecy It's In Chapter 1 Verse 3 Blessed Is The One Who Reads Aloud The Words Of This

Prophecy And Blessed Are Those Who Hear It And Take To Heart What Is Written In It Because The Time Is Near So We've All Been Blessed Because We've All Had A Reading Of Of This Prophecy So As We Come To This Chapter My First Question Is In Chapter 4 What Feature Is Emphasized And How Is It Emphasized I think I think I would Guess Worship And I Think It's Because We See It Over And Over Again In The Chapter Like We Are In Chapter 8 We See Worship About The Holiness Of God Holy Holy Is The Lord God Almighty Who Was And Is And Is To Come

And Then Again The Worthiness Of God To Be Worshipped In 11 You Are Worthy Our Lord And God To Receive Glory And Honor And Power For You Created All Things And By Your Will They Were Created And Have There Being Super Yeah Worship Is Very Much A Feature Of Both These Chapters And There's An Subtle Difference Between The Two Chapters In That Thank You Very Much Anybody Like To Add To That Something That's Prominent In The Chapters There's A Throne Attached And Someone Sitting On It Okay Why Would You Say That Because It Says Three Or Four How It's Describing A Throne Like A Rainbow With Emeralds Encircled On A Throne And There's 24 Other Thrones Around It Encircled

Around It Yeah Thank You I Mean Let's Just Spell It Out One Of The Ways In Which Things Are Emphasized In The Bible By A Repetition And If You Care To Look Verse!

Two There Before Me Was A Throne With Someone Sitting On It Verse Three A Rainbow Encircled The Throne Verse Four Surrounding The Throne Were Twenty Four Other Thrones Verse Five From The Throne Came Flashes Of Lightning In Front Of The Throne Seven Lamps Were Basing Verse Six In Front Of The Throne There Was A Sea Of Glass And In Verse Six Around The Throne Were Four Living Creatures And Verse Ten They Fell Down Before The One Who Sits On The Throne Throne!

[26:32] So That's To Contradict What Valerie Was Saying But It Is To Say That That Worship Focuses Itself On The Throne And What Are We Told About

The Occupancy Of The Throne He Is Worthy To Be Worshipped Thank You The Person On The Throne Is Worthy To Be Worshipped Thank You Yep In Verse Three He Had The Appearance Of Jasper And Ruby And Also A Rainbow That Shone Around Like An Emerald Thank You Very Much Yes In Fact There's Not A Lot Said Directly About The One Sitting On The Throne It's All Done Indirectly That's The Nearest You Get To A Direct Statement And

It's In It Is Indirect The One Who Sat There Had The Appearance Of Jasper And Ruby It Doesn't Say He Was Jasper And Ruby It Just Said He Was Like Jasper And Ruby And It Might Be Worth Turning To The First Chapters Of Ezekiel Let's See If We Can Do That Yeah What chapter I'm Thinking Of Chapter One And Of Course In My Old Bible I Had This All Marked But I Don't Have It Marked In This New Bible 27 Thank You Yes 27 Ezekiel One 27 I

Saw That From What Appeared To Be His If We Go Verse 26 Above The Vault Above The Hes Was What Looked Like A Throne Of Lapis Lazuli Whatever That Is And High On The Throne Was A Figure Like That Of A Man I Saw That From What Appeared To Be His Waste He Looked Like Glowing Metal As If Full Of Fire And From There Down He Looked Like Fire Brilliant Light Surrounded Him Like The Appearance Of A Rainbow In The Clouds On A Rainy Day So Was The Appearance Around Him This Was The Appearance Of The Likeness Of The Glory Of The Lord You See Every Way Just Distances Himself From The Actual Lord This Is What He Was Like Or This Is The Appearance Of What He Was Like Or This Is Like What He Was Like Because Presumably Human Language Doesn't Have Enough Intensity And Grandeur To Say Exactly The Being And Description Of The

Lord And Of Course When We Come To Revelation It's Quite Like That Isn't It The Rainbow We Had A Rainbow And We Have A Rainbow Here In Revelation Chapter 4 It Seems To Me That In Many Ways The Glory Of The One Sitting On The Throne Is Reflected To Us By The Accompaniment Around The Throne Back In The Days Of Barack Obama When He Was The President Of The United States I Can Imagine Do I Have A Memory Of This Or Is Imagination Of Him Arriving At Some Event In With Multiple Limousines And All Sort Of Shiny Black With Lights And Everything And The Doors Open And Out Come These Secret Service Men With All Their Security Gear And Immaculate Suits And Immaculate Haircuts And They Come Out And Look Around For The Security Problems And Such Is The Splendor Of The Accompaniments And President Obama Himself Appears Immaculately Dressed And Everything But Part Of His Splendor Is All The Stuff That Went On Around Him Isn't It The Security Guards And So On And That I Think Is The Sort Of Thing We're Seeing In This Chapter All The Things That Go On Around This Mighty Personage The Rainbow And The Audience And The Things That Are Going On There In Heaven Let's Stop For A Moment Because This Question Was What Is Prominent And It Is See The Throne And The Stuff

[31:33] Going On Around Which We'll Come To In A Moment Shall We Sing About The Throne And We Too Can Join In Worship As Those Preachers Did Sing That One Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah Let's stop for a little bit and just survey what there is there in chapter 4.

And then I want to make the transition into chapter 5. Anybody like to pick out a feature there to comment on, to ask about, or to point out to us?

You said that it was a bit unclear who the person was. Oh yeah. Sorry. Yeah, carry on.

I think you said that anyway. I might have phrased it wrongly. No, carry on with the question. It describes him as, in verse 9, as one who lives forever and ever.

Yeah. And then in verse 11, I think it's talking about the one on the throne. And then he says, our Lord and God. So he's implying that the person they're worshipping is, in fact, the Lord and God.

[33:26] Thank you. That's really well worth saying because I'm sorry if I didn't express that properly. What I was trying to say was there's not much description of him. It is what he is like.

But the person on there is the Lord God. Yeah, that's absolutely right, isn't it? We would say God the Father, I guess. Because this turns out to be quite Trinitarian. Yeah.

This is the creator who sits on the throne. Verse 11. You created all things. The one God who is the creator is sitting on the throne. Would anybody like to?

So thank you. That's really good to point that out. So anybody like to point out anything else about this scene? There's lots of... Yes. Chikundi.

I think like what you said before, the author of this is probably finding it hard to actually describe the person on the throne.

[34:27] But we see just how important he is through the different symbols of like strength and like royal symbols.

So things like the jewels that are mentioned around and on the throne. The living creatures there. You know, powerful creatures within society.

So a lion, an ox, an eagle. And even the mention of the weather elements there. So from the throne came flashes of lightning and rumblings and peals of thunder.

That's super. Yeah. Thank you very much. Yes. Let's just stop on one or two of those. So in verse 4, there are the 24 other thrones with 24 elders.

So let's see if we can do anything with that. So we have the throne and we have 24 other thrones.

[35:36] Now then, why 24, do you think? Yeah? That's a very tempting thought, isn't it?

Twelve. One of the things that John does is he likes numbers. And numbers signify something.

We're not allowed to just say, oh, I think I like the idea of 12, meaning 12 eggs and a dozen.

It's not referring us to eggs. It's 12 plus 12. And it's very tempting to say, is this the tribes of the Old Testament?

And is this the apostles of the New Testament? It's not, I don't think it's the sort of thing that you can be absolutely dogmatic about.

Because one other guy that I looked up, he says, oh, these are 24 angels. And if you count the angels in the rest of the book, it adds up to 24.

[36:41] I wasn't convinced by that. It does call them elders, doesn't it? It doesn't call them angels, it calls them elders. And generally speaking, elders are representatives of God's people.

So, shall we work with the idea that around the throne there are representatives of the church of the Old Testament and the church of the New Testament, all the people of God together.

So, that's one thing. Another thing you mentioned is in verse 5 and 6. Now, this little list gets repeated in various forms as we go through the book.

So, from the throne comes flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing.

The seven spirits of God in front of the throne, there is like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. The rumblings and thunders, I think he's got that from somewhere else in the Bible.

[37:51] Any suggestions? Or maybe I'm just making that up. You mustn't let me make things up. Exodus. Exodus, yep. Which bit of Exodus?

Mount Sinai. Mount Sinai, yeah. I think we've got there already. Yes, yeah. Carry on. Yes.

Moses said any animal that comes near is going to be stoned. I think it's something like that. Yeah, the thunders are, what's the word, reminiscent of the giving of the law in Exodus.

I think when they came to Mount Sinai, there was this sort of thundery, intimidating, frightening, powerful sounds. And I should correct myself and say it's verse 5, just that verse that gets repeated as a list.

You can check me out as we go further on in the book. I mean, just flipping over to 8 verse 5, this is another scene in front of the throne.

[39:07] 8 verse 5, then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, hurled it on the earth, and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

So the list is slightly expanded as we go through. Yep, there was that sea of glass. Anybody got any thoughts about the sea of glass?

There was something a bit like this in the tabernacle, I think. What was there? Well, there's certainly a curtain.

I was thinking, wasn't there a bowl that they could wash in? Yeah. Was it called something special? Lava or a... Yes.

I haven't got a reference for that. Maybe we could come back to that another time. But, so there are items from the temple, from the tabernacle, sort of magnified and extended.

[40:13] Of course, it was a sea of... It was a container of water, and this is now a sea, and it's a sea of glass, clear as crystal. And these

four creatures...

And they... In verse 8, they've got wings, and they say something.

Anybody like to see what John is picking up here? We did actually do this passage the other day. Holiness.

Yeah, holiness. In case you're going to say any more than that. You're not. Which passage... It's Isaiah 6, isn't it?

With the seraphim. Now, the seraphim are not quite the same as these. They're burning creatures like flames of fire. But it's the seraphim who say, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.

[41:16] The whole earth is full of his glory. These creatures say, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come. So, it's sort of expanded on that.

And the other throne creatures... I'm very tempted to see them akin to the cherubim. Because God's throne was flanked by the two cherubim in the tabernacle and in the temple.

So, in the tabernacle, they have wings, don't they? And they extend their wings over the Ark of the Covenant. And the wings just about fit within the space.

The tips of the wings touch. And these are the sort of throne creatures. They're like God's security operatives.

He never goes anywhere without these security detail accompanying him. Like Barack Obama wouldn't go anywhere without his secret service men. And the grandeur of these throne creatures reflects the grandeur of the one who they accompany.

[42:33] If you're interested, there is in the British Museum, I think, an Assyrian throne creature. And it has wings and a beard and four legs.

And you can see the Assyrian version of this in... It is in the British Museum, isn't it? Yeah. Sorry? I think it's got five legs.

I think it's got five legs. Okay. I hadn't noticed that, but I will take it from you that that's the case. Okay. Okay.

There's a lot there, but let's move on. And as Valerie said right at the beginning, the keynote here in response is worship. And they never stop saying, it says in verse 8, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come.

And there's this constant emphasis of worship. Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks, the 24 elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever.

[43:50] And it tells you what they say. And they say specifically, you are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power.

For you created all things. By your will they were created and have their being. So that's the content of the worship. You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power.

This is worship of the divine creator. Those are the words used. Now let's just flip on here. When we get into chapter 5, whoa, I'm giving the game away.

When we get into chapter 5, what is the new thing that happened? The writer quite often tells us theology by a little story, or a little flow chart.

No, it's not a flow chart. A storyboard of things that happen. You know, that's how they do map out a movie to make a storyboard. First picture is Tom Cruise ready to board the train.

[44:56] The next picture is Tom Cruise leaping on the train. And then the next picture is he sees the plutonium and jumps off the train. And there's a sequence of events, exciting events.

There's a sequence of events here. Anybody like to take us through it? I think it's the scroll. So in verse 1, who sat on the throne, there was a scroll with writing.

Then in verse 2, there's the question of who's worthy to open the scroll. Verse 3, we find out that no one can open the scroll. And then in verse 4, there's sadness because no one could open the scroll.

Then in verse 5, there's a solution because one has been found who can open the scroll. And then in verse 7, the scroll is taken.

Yeah. Yes. Excellent. That's good. You can do next week. Yeah. The sort of storyboard is, it begins with this tragedy.

[46:08] Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll? So it seems unopenable. Nobody's going to open this scroll. And there's a little

conversation.

So John weeps and weeps because nobody can open the scroll. What is the problem? It says specifically what the problem is.

Is it power, verse 4, or what is it? No one's found worthy. Nobody's found worthy. Thank you.

So there's a sort of question of achievement and merit in this. And then one of the elders gives the answer, which you probably knew all along, but as the storyboard progresses, it's given us an answer.

Do not weep. While you've got the microphone, tell us verse 5, who has triumphed.

[47:07] Just tell us verse 5. But one of the 24 elders said to me, stop weeping. The lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David's throne, has won the victory.

Thank you. And he's worthy to open the scroll. Amen. So worth just taking this to pieces a bit. He's described as an animal and a vegetable. It's true, isn't it? So he's the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David.

I mean, David's not a vegetable. David is a person. I have a theory, and I probably need to check this out, that Hebrew and Greek don't make the same distinction we do between a root which grows down and a shoot which grows up.

I think if it grows out of the seed, it is one of these things. So I think, and I do need to check this, that when it says the root of David, it could well mean a bit that springs out in our botany, a root springs downwards and a shoot springs upwards.

[48:24] But is that the case in Hebrew and Greek? Anyway, something springing out of David. How does John gain this information about the worthy person?

How does he gain this information? One of the elders, and he hears a voice. He hears a voice, and he's expecting from the voice to find a lion and possibly a vegetable, but let's focus on the lion.

And, Arsema, can you read us the verse that says what he does encounter in verse 6, please?

Then I saw a lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the 24 elders.

Okay, thank you. So, he, there's a discrepancy. How does he gain the information about the lion, sorry, about the lamb?

[49:46] How does he gain this information? He saw it. He hears, what he hears is a lion, what he sees is a lamb.

Interesting, there's two, two completely different things, aren't they? A lion and a lamb. You wouldn't mix them up, but, this is the way John likes to speak. You, you hear something, you hear, it's a lion, and when you look, it's a lamb.

And I think he does this more than once. Now, this is a simple question. Why, in the Bible, is it say lamb instead of saying squirrel or badger?

Why does it say, and I beheld a badger? Why does it specifically say a lamb? You all know the answer to this question. Hmm? But why does a lamb represent Jesus and a badger not represent Jesus?

It's a sacrificial animal. We, we, we, we jump to it very quickly, the lamb is Jesus, but of course, there's a specific reason why it's a lamb, because the lamb is a sacrificial animal.

[50:57] Can you give any examples of lamb being a sacrificial animal? The Passover lamb, yeah, the Passover lamb, where the lamb died instead of the firstborn son, and there was a substitution.

So, when he picks this, John, in his gospel, John the Baptist says, behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

So, this, this depiction of Jesus as the lamb is, is a crucial one. And, we find the lamb on the center of the throne.

Now, there's a description of the lamb, and I'm just, got one eye on the clock here. Tell us something about this description of the lamb that we, we notice.

Where is he and what, what, what, descriptions are applied to him. So, where, where is he is the first question. On the throne.

[52:04] Yeah, thank you. And he's surrounded by four living creatures. Yeah. And the elders.

Looking as if he had been slain. Thank you. So, there's that life-giving quality or life sacrifice. It's there in verse 9, isn't it?

You were slain and with your blood you purchased for God. I've got persons from every tribe and language and people and nation and you've made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign on the earth.

So, from that, what would you say is that constitutes the worthiness of the lamb in this particular scenario? Because he was slain.

Yeah. Because he was slain. His sacrificial death achieved something and, yeah, and expressed something which we will now say makes him worthy to do this scroll opening.

[53:12] Yeah, is that right? What he achieved by dying on the cross puts him in the position where he alone is worthy. There's no one else who's worthy because he weeps and weeps, doesn't he?

Because there's no one else that's like this. Only Jesus has died on the cross to free us from our sins. Only Jesus has redeemed people from every tribe and language and people and nation to make them a kingdom and priests.

Only he's done that. I would sort of say an amen to that because it's a tremendous depiction, isn't it? And this achievement makes him worthy to open the scrolls.

Okay, so I put the lamb upon the throne. What?

Yeah, does anybody else want to say anything else about the lamb? So he's in the center of the throne. I'm sorry? The root.

[54:22] Yeah, go on. Say something about the root. Yep. Well, if we think about it in Romans 11, it talks about the root.

And that's a spiritual heritage. So the Jews were chosen because the Jews, some were blinded to the non-elect, if you like. Then we talk about the olive tree and then we get the Gentiles who were grafted onto the olive tree.

And so this extends it then because it's saying to all tribes and all nations. Okay. Yeah. I mean, we've certainly got the olive tree in Romans 11, round about there, yeah, of the people of God. and that would certainly fit in with this internationalism of verse 9. Persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.

So it includes Jewish people but it actually goes far wider than that. So that would lend color to the idea of the 12 plus 12 being the Jewish root, if you like, and then the Gentile expansion.

[55:33] Yeah, thank you very much. Thank you very much. Anybody want to say anything else about the lamb? Can David have the mic please? I'll get it. Jesus was made complete through suffering.

Made perfect, made complete. So even though God and all the other business we've been hearing about, there's no sin in any of it. Likewise in Jesus but nevertheless because of suffering he is made more complete or more perfect.

Hebrews 2 verse 10 I think it might be helpful to paraphrase that he's a complete saviour because he hadn't achieved that before his cross and then he achieved it and he, does it say he was made perfect through suffering?

Yes, thank you. Can Valerie have the mic please? The lamb had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Thank you. Seven, I think I can convince you that seven is the number of wholeness, the whole deal and fascinating that the lamb has seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

[57:02] So I think this is a Trinitarian language. I think this is saying that the lamb has the spirit in fullness. That's a Trinitarian statement.

The lamb is not separate, no, let me try and put this right. The lamb is not indifferent to the spirit or irrelevant to the spirit.

And the spirit is not irrelevant to the lamb, but the lamb has, it says, the seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God.

That seems to me to chime in with John's gospel where he says, the spirit will come. I will send, I'll ask the father and he will send the spirit who proceeds from the father.

And when the spirit comes, the father comes and the son comes. So this is the close identification relationship between the lamb and the spirit.

[58:10] I think that's a really important point. Thank you very much. What, something crops up in verse eight.

Can you tell me what we find is relevant apparently in heaven in verse eight? Yeah.

the spirit of the Lord is upon me for he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor is that, I think that's, yeah, of course I'm misquoting it, so that's Isaiah 60.

Yeah, Isaiah 11, a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse, from his roots a branch will bear fruit, the spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

So amen, that's right, that's the connection that's made in Isaiah and echoed here in Revelation.

Thank you, yeah, that's right. Now, the last thing perhaps to look at is to say what words are used to worship the Lamb because the Lamb gets worship, doesn't he?

[59:52] So could you summarize or point out the language of worship as it's addressed to the Lamb? He is worthy, yes, I'm just going to hand you the microphone because you could be a little bit more specific.

Could you just pass that back? Worthy in what way? He's worthy to be worshipped because he was slain and he's received power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise.

Thank you. While you've got the microphone, I've talked to Jehovah's Witnesses about this and could you tell me how many notches less worship Jesus gets than the creator?

How many notches less is the worship offered to Jesus than it is to the creator? I was actually going to say there's a progression from worship of the father and then worship progresses and expands really to the son and then at the end it's the whole of heaven and earth are worshipping them both. Yes. Thank you. If I was to answer my own question seeing as I asked it, there are no notches less and as Rosemary said, the notches actually increase.

[61:28] The worship of the lamb is of the same order as worship of the father because the father is worshipped. You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power for you are the creator.

And in verse 12, worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise. The wording is no less for Jesus than it is for the father. So I say to the Jehovah's witnesses, that must be a mistake, mustn't it? Because Jesus gets honored as if he was the father. Because they would say that Jesus shouldn't be honored like the father.

The father is greater and the son is several notches below. So I say to them, well look, it's the same. Or if it was Rosemary, it's not even higher. And so I say to the Jehovah's witnesses, well that must be a mistake, mustn't it?

Go and tell me where the mistake is in that. They've never come back and told me. Of course they never get prepared for that one. But it's there, isn't it? The father is worshipped in chapter four and the worship of the son is no less.

[62:40] In fact, if you like, it's amplified. And John's gospel says, he who does not honor the son does not honor the father. And they're not worshippers of God if they don't worship the son with equal honor that the father is worshipped.

we should be stopping. It's a fantastic chapter, isn't it? It sort of bursts in with that.

I would like to just offer the fact that it begins with the throne. It's going to go on into conflict and trouble and issues and pressures, but it starts off saying, there is a throne in heaven and it's sort of emphatic, isn't it?

There is a throne. There's someone sitting on the throne. And I think that is such an important thing for us as Christians because the evil one will say, oh well, God is not in control.

God hadn't realized that this was a problem for you. God isn't that bothered about you even if he's there. And the book of Revelation says, look, there is a throne.

[63:53] And the scroll, which I would like to persuade you next time, is the scroll of world history. And the world history can progress because somebody can open the scroll.

And the scroll of world history is in the nail-pierced hands of the Lord Jesus. And I think that is so helpful for us, isn't it? To know that as things unfold, whether it's issues large or small, you know, Mr. Putin, Donald Trump, your next hospital appointment, dear Jason with his heart attack, all of these events come from the Lamb upon the throne.

And I think that gives us cause to praise and to trust and to come back to it and tell ourselves when we think, oh it's all out of control to say, actually, there is someone on the throne.

There is someone on the throne. Yeah. I'm going to suggest we close with a song and then we'll just finish with that. I was going to say, I know who holds the future and he'll guide me with his hand, but if you can think of something better while I'm looking for the book, please, please think of it. think of some some of some