

Blessing, Glory and Honor Forever

Key Verse: “*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*”
—*Revelation 5:12*

Selected Scripture:
Revelation 5:6-14

FROM JOHN'S VANTAGE

point, he was enabled to look both backward and forward over the pages of mankind's history. Thus he could better understand the unfolding of God's plan in its many facets. The events of today's lesson take us back to the beginning of the Christian dispensation.

In his vision, John saw “in the right hand of him that sat on the throne” a book, or scroll, written on the front and backside. This book is a symbolic reference to the plan of God as written in the Scriptures. As John viewed this book, however, he noted that it was “sealed with seven seals,” and was not open to reveal its contents. A great quandary was posed by a “strong angel,” who asked, “Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?”—Rev. 5:1,2

The answer to this dilemma is found in the doctrine of man's atonement from Adamic sin. According to God's justice, the only remedy for Adam's condemnation to death through disobedience was for a ransom, or corresponding price, to be provided. Such a price had to be in the form of a perfect man, just as Adam was perfect prior to falling into sin. (I Cor. 15:21,22) God's only begotten

Son left his prehuman condition in the heavenly realm and was born of Mary as a human being, and given the name Jesus. This was so that he might accomplish the all-important ransoming work on behalf of Adam and his race.—Ps. 40:7,8; Isa. 6:8

Man's atonement is one of the most essential doctrines taught in the Bible. All other aspects of God's plan radiate from the work of redeeming mankind from Adamic sin and its resulting curse of death. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist declared, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1:29

Jesus laid down his life in sacrifice for three and a half years, and became the ransom price for Adam when he died on the cross, declaring, "It is finished." (John 19:30) His disciples did not understand what was happening at the time, even though Jesus told them he must die and be raised on the third day. (Luke 18:31-33) Ten days after his ascension to the heavenly realm, on the Day of Pentecost, Jesus' disciples received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:1-4) Later, the Apostle Paul explained that the lives of these spirit-begotten followers of Christ had now changed, saying, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. 8:14

Through the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, we understand that Jesus was faithful to God's plans and purposes and was raised as a glorious spirit being. Those in John's vision, however, were heavyhearted and wept because no one was found worthy to open and read the book. (Ps. 49:7) "Weep not," proclaimed one of the elders. "The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. 5:3-5) Consequently, it was said of Jesus, "Thou art worthy: ... for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." (vs. 9) Finally, our Key Verse confirms the atonement, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" ■