

Lifelines

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Topic: *The Lion Who is the Lamb*

The Lion Who is the Lamb!

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ is one of my favorite books in the Bible, not because of its appeal to end-times prognosticators, but because of its rich history in using theological images to convey wonderful, timeless spiritual truth to us. The book after all, is stated to be “The revelation of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 1:1), not the revelation of end times. Jesus is the central character, and the One who is worthy of all praise and glory! So the next time you read a passage out of the book of Revelation, I encourage you to change your focus, and ask God to show you what the passage reveals about Jesus. It will open up your horizons and deepen your theology.

It was written during a time when Christians were being persecuted by the Roman Empire, because they refused to bow down and worship the Roman Emperor. It is God’s encouragement to follow Jesus, who followed God to the cross, died, and thereby opened up the resurrection to all who believe. This is what we celebrate at Easter time!

When you are obeying God, and following Jesus, not even death can stop you. Jesus lived a sinless life, and was crucified to shed His blood, so that our sins could be forgiven, and restore us to a right relationship with God. Because Jesus resurrected, and lives forever, we who become Christians have the promise of eternal life that begins when we invite Jesus into our lives, and carries us through death, out of the grave, and into an eternal relationship with God.

In Revelation 5 we see that God is on the throne; God is mentioned on the throne in almost every chapter of Revelation. The world can be in chaos, our lives in turmoil, but God is still reigning, and in control of Heaven and Earth, and what happens in our lives. In 5:1, God is seen on the throne, holding a scroll which is filled with writing on both sides. A strong angel cries out: “Who is worthy to take the scroll from the hand of God, and have authority to open the seals?” In verse three it states that “No one in Heaven on the Earth or under the Earth was found worthy to open the book, nor open the seals.” (Rev. 5:3 NASB). John began to weep because no one was found to be worthy to open it.

Then one of the elders around the throne said: “Do not weep. Look, the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered so that He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals (Rev. 5:5). So as John turns his eyes to see the Lion of Judah, he instead sees One who looked like a slaughtered lamb. John expected to see the Lion of Judah, a Messiah who would tear the Romans to pieces; instead he sees the Lamb of God, who conquered by sacrificing Himself. The Lamb was standing between God on His throne, and the all of creation and humanity. Jesus is the one Mediator (go between) between God the Creator, and man the creation (see 1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus is the only One who is worthy to rescue

humanity, the only One who can release us from our sinful nature. Jesus, the Lamb of God, strode over to God and took the book from God's hand. In Matthew 11:27 Jesus said: "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son desires to reveal Him (the Father) to."

In Revelation 5:8-10, when Jesus took the scroll into His hand, all of Heaven broke into song, singing that Jesus is the only One worthy to take the book and open it, for He was slaughtered to rescue us and to bring us into relationship with God the Father. Jesus brings the forgiveness of sins, and restores our relationship with God, for all who turn to Jesus and believe.

This is the message of Christianity, and the message of Jesus, and of Easter: God created you and loves you, but sin separates us from God and from life with Him. Receive Jesus, be forgiven, place your life in His hand, and you too will enter into a daily relationship with God, and live with God forever! Jesus is risen and thereby conquers sin, death, guilt and separation. Turn to Jesus, He can change your life forever! Experience the Life Beyond!

Award-winning columnist Dr. Ed Jordan is pastor of Gwynn's Island Baptist Church, Gwynn, VA. He can be reached at szent.edward@gmail.com. Dr. Jordan's new book: "Doing Love! It can change your life!" can be purchased on Barnes&Noble.com or Amazon.com.