

COVENANT — A NEW BEGINNING

The Throne Room

LESSON 12

AUGUST 23, 2026

LESSON TEXT

Revelation 4–5

FOCUS VERSE

Revelation 5:5

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

TRUTH ABOUT COVENANT

Being in covenant gives us peace that God is in control and has a plan to redeem His creation.

MY RESPONSE TO COVENANT

By God's Spirit, I will promote peace amid a world of chaos.

COVENANT CONTEXT

We come to the last book of the Bible and to the breathtaking revelation of Jesus Christ. In the first few chapters, we are awed to see Jesus as the Lion and the Lamb. Revelation 5 gives us a visual image of God's covenant plan to redeem humanity through His shed blood on Calvary. Although chaos will soon overwhelm the earth, peace reigns in Heaven because God is on the throne in Heaven.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: God promises us the kind of peace that “passes all understanding.” What do you think that means?

Teacher Tip: Connect the group's answers to the peace we see in the Book of Revelation, even amid chaos on the earth.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection.

I. THE MAJESTY OF JEHOVAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. Holy, Holy, Holy

B. Thou Art Worthy

DISCUSS: *When you worship God, what titles or attributes do you worship Him for?*

C. I will honor God as the center of my life and purpose, and I will serve no other gods.

DISCUSS: *When you are in awe of God, how do you respond? How should we respond?*

II. THE LAMB IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. The Scroll and the Seals
- B. The Lion and the Lamb
- C. Breaking the Seals
- D. I will find hope in the Book of Revelation for I know Jesus is in charge. (V)

DISCUSS: *Why are people often fearful of the Book of Revelation? What should our response be instead?*

III. A NEW SONG

- A. We Sing with the Elders

DISCUSS: *If you were writing a song to worship God, what would you include in it?*

- B. All Creation Sings

DISCUSS: *What do you feel when you realize that even Hell must join in the song of praise to the Lamb?*

- C. I will give God my past, live for Him in my present, and trust Him with my future.

Internalizing the Message (I)

PRAYER FOCUS

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to fill our hearts with peace despite the chaos in our world
- For God to fill us with the wonder of His presence that causes us to fall to our knees in worship, just like those in His throne room

LESSON CONNECTION

Years ago after preaching a message about the Lamb, while the pastor was greeting people after the service, one of the men shared something with him he never forgot. A close friend was between careers and desperate for work so he took a job in a slaughterhouse. It was not a pleasant job, obviously, and it was made worse because his role included killing the cattle before the actual butchering process began. Initially he hated the job, but over time he became accustomed to all the sights, sounds, and smells that were part of the process of subduing an animal and ending its life.

But after a time the slaughterhouse made the decision to process sheep along with cattle. The day arrived when this man had to butcher his first lamb. *Ah well*, he thought, *just another animal*. He slit the throat of the lamb, but rather than thrashing and fighting death, the lamb stayed calm. Some of its blood had gotten onto the man's hands. As its own life ebbed away, the lamb gently licked the blood off the man's hands. The lamb's last act was serving the man who had ended its life.

Something broke within this man and he quit his job on the spot. He had fought with many powerful animals as he ended their lives, their bellows of protest in his ears, but something about the calm acceptance and sweet kindness of the lamb in death impacted him in a way no violent struggle ever had. Isaiah wrote of the Messiah: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep

before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). This description would seem to depict an act of weakness, the Messiah meekly submitting to the dominance of humanity, but a much deeper power was being released in Jesus’ obedience to death on the cross. In fact Isaiah concluded the chapter with these prophetic words: “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:12). Sometimes a loving act of submission unleashes far greater power than any show of strength, as Revelation 4–5 will reveal.

BIBLE LESSON

I. THE MAJESTY OF JEHOVAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. Holy, Holy, Holy

Revelation 4 is a beautiful chapter that shifts our vision from the chaos on earth to the glory in Heaven. John’s vision of Heaven opened on a single throne and one who sits upon it. Every other description of the throne room of God—the swirl of colors, the priceless gems, the angelic living creatures, and the twenty-four elders all wearing crowns of gold—are simply window dressing to the central figure on the throne. John took it all in, attempting to physically describe the profound spiritual sights he was seeing.

Then he wrote what he heard. A soaring round of continual praise erupted from the angelic living creatures around the throne: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8). The voice of one does not stop before another takes its place. God is literally surrounded by praise. He does inhabit praise. Those closest to Him know He is so worthy that they never rest praising Him. Their praise is infectious and inspires twenty-four elders who fall down before the throne, casting their own crowns as they add their voices. Those who encounter the Creator face-to-face will always feel the need to worship Him.

B. Thou Art Worthy

John described four beasts, or living creatures, as having faces resembling some of the most notable creatures in creation: lions, mighty oxen, flying eagles, and even the face of man (Revelation 4:6–7). The lion is called “the king of beasts,” the ox is the strongest of all domesticated animals, the eagle is called “the king of the air,” while humanity represents the pinnacle of God’s creation. All creation knows they must worship the one who is greatest—the Creator.

Scholars have long debated who the twenty-four elders are, but an interesting parallel is that the priesthood was organized into twenty-four shifts. Those who were on duty at any given moment represented the whole priestly body. (See I Chronicles 24.) These elders are first shown wearing golden crowns, but when they see the Almighty, they cast their crowns at His feet and fall down to worship Him. The highest purpose of all God’s creation is to praise its Creator, but since humans are created in His image, we have the unique opportunity to *choose* to worship Him. That makes our praise special.

DISCUSS: *When you worship God, what titles or attributes do you worship Him for?*

C. I will honor God as the center of my life and purpose, and I will serve no other gods.

The idea of covenant relationship with God goes all the way back to the beginning. God could have created us as robots to wind us up and hear us repeat, “Holy, holy, holy,” but God was looking for something more profound. He chose to create us in His image with the power of choice. James lamented: “The tongue can no man tame” (James 3:8). In our day many people have waxed very bold in their defiance against God and His values, using their words to reveal the corruption and rebellion against God within them. That makes our voluntary choice to love God even more beautiful and fulfilling. When we *choose* to cast the crowns of our own pride and worth at His feet, it makes our praise especially sweet. Coercion does not force the twenty-four elders to fall to their knees in worship; adoration and awe do.

DISCUSS: *When you are in awe of God, how do you respond? How should we respond?*

II. THE LAMB IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

A. The Scroll and the Seals

The note of celebration turns to tension as Revelation 5 opens. Our attention is directed to a scroll in Jehovah’s hand. That scroll is rolled shut, and along its edge are seven seals that must be opened before the scroll can be read and its commands executed. A strong angel issued a loud challenge that boomed across Heaven, the earth, and even Hell itself: “Who is worthy to open the books, and to loose the seals thereof?” (Revelation 5:2).

Silence followed and John began to weep because no man was found worthy to open the scroll. It was more than just a document, a curiosity; it represented the stalemate that exists without a Savior. Fallen humanity needs redemption, but no human, save for the Savior, could redeem us. God chose to bind Himself by His own covenant, for Hebrews 9:22 states: “Without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 10:4 also declares: “It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” God required blood for atonement, but since Spirit has no blood to shed, the stalemate continued. John wept over the hopelessness of a world without Jesus.

B. The Lion and the Lamb

But John’s sorrow was short lived as one of the elders called to him: “Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” (Revelation 5:5). That makes sense. A lion is fierce and powerful, the king of beasts. Its roar can be heard up to five miles away. A lion can run up to forty-six miles per hour. Its bite is strong enough to kill large prey in a single bite. John turned to see this great lion, but in the middle of the throne, he saw a lamb: a lamb “as it had been slain” (Revelation 5:6).

Some Bible translations use the harsher word *slaughtered*. A lion we could understand, but a lamb? Redemption was more an act of selfless submission than sheer domination. Jesus’ life could not be taken; He chose to give it. Jesus said of His life: “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John 10:18). How interesting that Jesus used the word *power* to describe laying down His life.

This visual imagery of the Lion and the Lamb reveals the beauty of God's covenant plan. Jesus was not a surrogate, or just one sent by God, for He came from the very middle of the throne. Second Corinthians 5:19 reads: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." As the Lion, God chose not to open the scroll, but as the Lamb—God manifest in human flesh—He is able and worthy.

The final book of the Bible is called *Revelation* but not for mystical end-time prophecy. This throne room scene is the critical moment of the book, the revelation of Jesus Christ—the moment we see that all of God's eternal plan hinged on the crucified Lamb. The scroll cannot be opened, the judgment of the wicked cannot proceed, wrongs cannot be righted, and the righteous cannot be rewarded without the Lamb's ultimate sacrifice and victory.

C. Breaking the Seals

Jesus stepped forward and took the scroll as Heaven again erupted in worship. Immediately the living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down to worship the Lamb. This moment confirmed exactly who Jesus is, as Jehovah does not share His glory with anyone. Yet before the throne, the angels, the living creatures, and four and twenty elders worshiped Jesus because He is worthy—worthy to take the scroll, worthy to unlock God's plan of redemption, worthy to judge, worthy to reward, and worthy of worship.

In Revelation 4 Heaven erupted to worship God as our Creator, but in Revelation 5 Heaven worshiped Him as God our Redeemer. Paul's beautiful hymn in Philippians 2 celebrated Jesus because of His humble sacrifice and sings: "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10–11).

D. I will find hope in Revelation, for I know Jesus is in charge.

Far too often people have treated the Book of Revelation with fear and uncertainty, but we should find deep and abiding hope in this book. In fact Revelation 1:3 promises a blessing on those who hear and keep what's written in it. The Book of Revelation is not the revelation of the mark of the beast or the Antichrist; it is the ultimate revelation of Jesus and His sacrifice. It reveals how Jesus' sacrifice saves us from sin on an individual level and unlocks the whole of eternity.

(V) In subsequent chapters, we see spiritual darkness at unprecedented levels, death on a scale previously unknown, and even the collapse of our planet into a broken, unrecognizable form. But Heaven understands the end is already determined, Jesus is already victorious, and the reward of the righteous is certain. How can we know this? The elders sang in triumph: "We shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10). They not only celebrated what Jesus *had* done, but they also rejoiced in the surety of their future reward in His eternal kingdom. We too have hope because of the Cross. Our Lord is in control, and He has already won the victory.

***DISCUSS:** Why are people often fearful of the Book of Revelation? What should our response be instead?*

III. A NEW SONG

A. We Sing with the Elders

At the unveiling of Jesus as our Redeemer, Heaven erupted into a new song. The elders and living creatures sang to

praise Jesus for His redemption, and they declared that Jesus' church will be made up of people from every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. God's church is truly a global church. The song celebrated our redemption from sin, and our victorious future as He makes us kings and priests to reign with Him on earth in days to come.

DISCUSS: *If you were writing a song to worship God, what would you include in it?*

B. All Creation Sings

The song was taken up by an angelic host that numbered over one hundred million strong. They sang, "Worthy is the Lamb" (Revelation 5:12) and they never tire of singing their song. Then their song spread further. Eventually every creature must join in the song: "Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them" (Revelation 5:13). Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus is Lord, even the sulfur-stained knees in the demonic realm (under the earth). This shows the scale of Jesus' victory on the cross. The impact of Calvary reverberates across all the created world, both physical and spiritual. The cross and the empty tomb display the greatest victory of all time.

DISCUSS: *What do you feel when you realize that even Hell must join in the song of praise to the Lamb?*

C. I will give God my past, live for Him in my present, and trust Him with my future.

Jesus is still the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. There is no other way to the Spirit of God but through the gospel. There is no ultimate victory, no redemption, without Him. He is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). People put their trust in many things, but anything except Jesus is destined to failure. As Edward Mote penned in his hymn, "On Christ the solid Rock, I stand: all other ground is sinking sand." The song of the redeemed rejoices over redemption from their past, the pleasure of serving God in the present, and the glorious promise of their future all because of the Lamb. So, give God your past, live for Him in the present, and trust Him with your future.

Teacher Option: *Tell the story below or share one of your own to illustrate how we can have peace even while the world is in chaos.*

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

(I) A man told of an art competition where the challenge was to depict a scene of peace. The various paintings were mostly what one would expect: idyllic scenes of still waters, scenic landscapes, sunsets, and more. But one painting stood out.

Artist Jack Dawson had painted a scene that at first glance looked nothing like peace. It was a dark and moody canvas of violent waterfalls gushing over jagged cliffs and plunging into a violent whirlpool below. Lightning forked through the dark sky and wind and rain lashed the scene. As the man looked at the painting, he initially wondered whether the artist understood the theme at all. But then his eye was drawn to a cleft in the rock face, where a dove rested safely and securely in her nest. Yes, the storm was raging all around her, but she was secure in her place of safety. It could not reach her, so she was at peace.

This description is like the peace Jesus promises us. He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). The world cannot understand this kind of peace because it defines peace as the absence of conflict or the absence of threat. But peace is closer connected to the presence of purity than the absence of conflict. The Book of Revelation shows us that one simply cannot expect the absence of conflict in the last days. We certainly have ample evidence of that all around us.

Jesus made it clear this world would be full of troubles and tribulations, but He also promised we can have peace despite it all. How? "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; *I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33, emphasis added). Revelation 4 and 5 show us that Heaven is full of praise, worship, joy, and peace, even as the storms of the last days batter the earth. We can have peace even in these tumultuous last days in our world because Jesus, the Lamb, has already overcome the world.