

## **Chapter 5**

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John learns that Christ holds the keys to save the dispensations of man. All of heaven praises the Savior for His gift to mankind.

**Verse 1:** The Father has a book in His right hand. Just by being on God's right hand, we can determine a little about this book. The right hand has been a symbol of God's glory. We are told that the righteous will be placed on God's right hand. This symbolic meaning would indicate that the book is a glorious plan or work. The Doctrine and Covenants, section 77, verse 6, states that the book spoken of in this verse contains, "*the revealed will, mysteries, and the work of God; the hidden things of his economy concerning the earth during the seven thousand years of it's continuance, or it's temporal existence*". The seals are closed portions of each dispensation, with each dispensation representing 1,000 years.

**Verse 2:** An angel comes out of heaven and asks if there is anyone worthy to open the book, and reveal the great mysteries of God.

**Verse 3:** Though God was willing to reveal all his mysteries to man, no one was found worthy to even look at the book.

**Verses 4-5:** At this point, John the beloved begins to weep at the thought of never knowing the contents of this book. Fortunately, John is interrupted by one of the elders who tells him, not to cry because the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Jesus the Christ, has been called to open this book. This title, "*The Lion of the Tribe of Judah*", is a title seldom used in scripture to refer to the Savior; however, it's symbolic meaning is very fitting. The lion is commonly referred to as the King of the Forest. Hosea, chapter 5, verse 14, says that the Lord will be as a young lion to the house of Judah. Genesis, chapter 49, verse 9, says that Judah is a Lion's whelp, or the offspring of a Lion. As one follows the history of ancient Judah, and sees the loving parental care given by the God of the Old Testament, one can see the relationship of lion and whelp. The verse also refers to the Savior coming out of the root of *David* (see *Isaiah 11:10*). The word root doubles as descendant, as in tracing your roots. Christ was born the "adopted" son of Joseph, who was a literal descendant of David.

**Verses 6-7:** After being referred to as the Lion of Judah, John changes his choice of symbolism. He related back to the vision that is unfolding. He states that the Lamb "came into their midst" representing the Savior. This particular representation is slightly different from the usual reference to the Savior as the Lamb of God. The Lamb is represented

with (7) seven horns and (7) seven eyes; although, the Joseph Smith translation has corrected this passage and says that the Lamb has (12) twelve horns and (12) twelve eyes. John says that Lamb was slain. This references the fact that He was crucified. It might also mean that He was worthy to open the book after his mission was accomplished on earth, earning him the right to open His Fathers mysteries. The answer to the symbolic meaning behind the (12) twelve horns is answered in part in the same verse. The (12) twelve horns represent the (12) twelve servants of God sent forth unto all the earth. The symbol of a horn is fitting as horns are generally used to represent power. The horns obviously represent the (12) twelve apostles and the power of heaven that they represent. The (12) twelve eyes are symbols of knowledge (*verse 6*). The Lamb is allowed to take the book from the Father (*verse 7*).

**Verse 8:**

After the Savior takes the book, the elders and the beasts fall before him. John says that they took out harps and vials full of odours. It is understandable that all would praise the Son of God for being able to open the book, for that represented the salvation of all mankind. Harps are symbolic of the bridge between heaven and earth. A bridge which was built by the Savior. Likewise, the vials full of odours represent the prayers of the saints. Any prayer offered by the saints was and is done through our mediator, Jesus Christ, who became such through His sacrifice. We close our prayers in his name. Through his sacrifice, we can be worthy to speak with the Father. Prior to the Savior's coming into the world, I am sure that the prayers of the saints were always directed towards his coming. The Savior taking the book from his Father represented the fulfillment of the saints prayers. Odours in Greek is better translated as incense. Incense was always burned in the age of the Old testament, prior to presenting anything to the Lord (Exodus 30). Even before the lamps in the temple were lit incense was burned. If the saints were praying for a redeemer, someone that might be able to loosen the seals of the book, it is fitting that it be represented in the form of incense or vials of odours.

**Verses 9-10:** The multitude present then broke out in song, obviously a form of praise for their redemption. John records the song, which he calls a "*New Song*". It is as follows;

*Thou art worthy to take the book,  
and open the seal 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 Priest;  
and we shall reign on earth.*

Note some of the important references to us today and our modern day temples.

**Verses 11-14:** John then tries to relate what must have been an indescribable sight. A multitude, which he says was innumerable, gathers to hail the redeemer, that he was worthy enough to redeem us all from our fallen state. They bear witness that all that the Father had is given to the Son. The multitude is then joined by every creature on and under the earth and heaven.