



REVELATION 5:12

קְרָאִים בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל
נֹאֵה לֵשׁהּ הַטְּבוּחַ
לְקַחַת עֵץ וְעֵשֶׂר
וְחִכְמָה וְגִבּוּרָה
וְקִדְר וְכִבּוֹד וְבִרְכָּה:

Saying with a loud voice:
"Worthy is the Lamb
who was slain To receive
power and riches and
wisdom,
And

strength and honor and glory and blessing

KALLERSON
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Artwork by Douglas Kallerson

REVELATION 5:12 (WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN)

Read Revelation 5

Religious pluralism is defined as “the acceptance and coexistence of multiple religious beliefs and practices within a society, emphasizing that various religions can provide meaningful paths to spiritual fulfillment and fostering tolerance and understanding among diverse faiths” (AI Overview).

In a nutshell, religious pluralism teaches that different, even contradictory, religions are equally valid and provide their own suitable and acceptable path to restoration with God.

Religious syncretism is defined as “the blending of different religious belief systems or the incorporation of beliefs from one tradition into another, often resulting in a new or modified religious practice or belief system” (AI Overview).

Religious syncretism is a pick-and-choose approach to religion – “This aspect of this religion is appealing, and so I will add it to my approach to religious expression.” For example, the Roman Catholic Church has adopted this path throughout the centuries.

Such expressions include Santeria, Haitian Voodoo, Kongo Syncretism, etc. Indigenous festivals are observed, various local confessions and approaches to healings are maintained, and native sacred objects are incorporated into the faith.

A stunning example of this was seen in 2019 when the Pope held the Amazon Synod at the Vatican. At that gathering, the Andean fertility goddess Pachamama was revered and adherents were welcomed to bow before the carvings in reverence, prayer, and petition.

The Pope himself acknowledged the deity and held his own observances of it in the Vatican Gardens.

Text Verse: *“So shall He sprinkle many nations.*

Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;

For what had not been told them they shall see,

And what they had not heard they shall consider.” Isaiah 52:15

Such practices by the Pope and others are not unique to Roman Catholicism. They are more pronounced, however, because of the size, scope, and authority of the denomination in the world.

Because of its worldwide presence, the world views Roman Catholicism as the leader of the Christian faith, and they see the Pope as the ultimate representative of it. Therefore, his acceptance of pluralistic and syncretistic doctrines allows people to more readily accept such teachings.

There are a variety of reasons why pluralism and syncretism are accepted within religions and societies. One is an attempt to provide harmony between otherwise warring factions. Religious battles have led to the deaths of innumerable people over the millennia.

Other reasons include control, power, accumulation of wealth, naivete, a refusal to acknowledge that God has the right to judge according to a set plan that is exclusive of personal merit, etc.

The list could go on and on because, for every person who wants to do his own thing, there must then be an allowance for that new thing if pluralism is to remain valid.

But there is a problem within this greater framework of hoped-for global kumbaya. That problem is the truth that various religious expressions do not allow the practice of other religions. They make exclusive claims that are at odds with the idea of pluralism.

This is certainly true with Islam, for example. However, one of the allowable tenets of Islam is that it is acceptable for adherents to lie in order to further the goals of the faith. Therefore, as Islam enters into societies, unless it simply takes over by the sword and subdues its foes, adherents can make claims that are untrue in order to meet their ultimate goals.

For this reason, among others, Islam is given a pass in societies and is gathered into the fold of naïve pluralistic societies that desire peace and security while demonstrating their tolerance for those who are “less fortunate,” “oppressed,” etc.

The real stickler for the world, therefore, is not the slow and carefully plotted overtaking of the world by Islam or even communism, which is its own sort of religious expression. Rather, the stickler is found in adherents to Scripture as is recorded in the Holy Bible. They are those who refuse to bow their knee to the concept that “all paths lead to God.”

This is intolerable to a society and a world that is supposedly marching toward a state of complete tolerance. Unfortunately, when there is something intolerable blocking such a goal, it must be eradicated. The book of Revelation details what will happen to those who refuse to bend their knee to this tolerant society that is yet future to us now.

Reading Revelation 5, one can see how incompatible the true Christian faith, meaning accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, is to religious pluralism. This has not gone unrecognized in Christian societies.

Over the years, those who refuse to accept Christ, who are unqualified to minister, or who just don't care about proper theology have entered into the ministry, causing Christianity to degrade.

Some have entered with the set goal of destroying sound churches from within. It has been a constant battle in all Christian-centered Western societies.

As soon as the reformation got its foothold in one area or another, someone would begin the march toward weakening the faith of the various denominations and churches. In America, the freedom of religious expression allowed Christianity to bloom in an amazing way, seemingly securing it from any such decline.

But the very mechanism that has allowed freedom of religion has helped bring the faith to a state of complete confusion. For example, Joseph Smith had the same book in his hand that Dwight Moody held. Mormonism is Christian in name only, but that name allows it to be considered under the Christian umbrella.

Even churches that started out doctrinally sound but later want to deviate from biblical precepts are slowly allowed to do so without a great deal of controversy, except by those who hold to a proper evaluation of Scripture in its intended context.

For example, the first woman to be ordained as a Protestant minister in the US, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, set a precedent that is unbiblical. However, the event became the first of an unstoppable tide of apostasy from what is biblically acceptable. Despite that, someone had to ordain her, and so the corruption was already in place before the day of her ordination.

Since then, churches and denominations have continued to degrade from adherence to Scripture to the point where many are, like Mormonism, Christian in name only.

Their rites and rituals gather together people who have never experienced the saving message of grace that is found in Jesus Christ. Instead, they are led astray into what Paul would call the “doctrines of demons.”

Pluralism, syncretism, and the loosening of doctrines within the church for the sake of accommodation have brought the Christian faith to a state of high confusion and moral degradation that can only be corrected through a return to the acceptance of and adherence to Scripture alone for the conduct and faith practice of adherents.

That is not expected to take place before the Lord comes for His church. Rather, that is just a note of how it could come about for those who care enough to depart from the false religious expressions they have been following.

Because of the high level of biblical illiteracy in our nation, people looking for a church here in Sarasota, for example, may decide on Sunday morning to go to a Mormon church or a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses because it is close and convenient.

Without knowing anything about the Bible or what it proclaims, they may enter the doors of such a church, think it represents the Christian faith, and spend the rest of their lives never coming to know Jesus Christ for who He is and what He has done to redeem man.

When considered in its intended light, Revelation 5 reveals a truth that is undeniable. This truth spans all nations, cultures, societies, and people. It also spans all ages since the first man walked on earth. Verse 3 said that no one in heaven or on the earth was able to open the scroll or look at it.

Buddha could not do so. Confucius could not do so. Muhammed could not do so. No pope, priest, or preacher could do so. No king, prime minister, or president could do so. Nobody could.

The words signify total unworthiness. No person within any religious or societal structure that has ever existed was found worthy. Not only could none take it in his hand or loose its seals, but all were deemed unworthy to even take a momentary glance at the scroll.

The state of either positional or moral unworthiness of all beings in creation excluded such a glance. Angels, for example, may be morally qualified, but their position as spirits excludes them.

Humans may be positionally qualified, being of the seed of Adam, but their moral state as fallen beings who have inherited original sin excludes them. None are found worthy. The list includes these categories:

- *No one in heaven* – No human being who has ever lived and who is currently in the heavenly realms is qualified. Enoch, the seventh man from Adam, was translated directly to heaven because he “walked with God” – unworthy. Elijah, the great prophet of Israel, also went directly to heaven in a chariot of fire – unworthy. No angel in heaven as well. Due to their state in creation – unworthy.
- *No one on the earth* – Think of the people on the earth today whom you may admire. A great evangelist – unworthy. The US president – unworthy. Some other noted pastor or politician – unworthy. You – unworthy. Me – unworthy. Repeat this for the other 7 or 8 billion people on earth – all unworthy.
- *No one under the earth* – Every human who has ever existed since the creation of Adam and who is now resting in the dust from which they came. Just think about it! Great men of God, great world leaders, missionaries, evangelists, heroes of the Bible – all unworthy.

And not only are we all unable to open the scroll, but we also aren’t even worthy to look at it.

All humans have inherited Adam’s sin directly in three ways: Legally – we are legally in Adam because He is our federal head. Potentially – the very fact that we *could exist* as human beings brings us into direct contact with Adam. Seminally – all humans who *actually exist* (from the very moment of conception) are stained with Adam’s sin, having inherited it as a result of the fall. Death, which is the wages of sin, proves this. Even infant babies aren’t excluded.

As an important note, this verse disproves the immaculate conception of Mary. If Mary were born and had remained in a sinless state, then she would be... worthy. But no one, including Mary the mother of Jesus, is found worthy according to Revelation 5.

This frightening passage should leave all of us humbled. We have no claim to boast before God because we are unworthy. No wonder it says that John wept bitterly. He literally burst into tears. As the NKJV renders it, “So I wept much.”

In the Greek, the pronoun is emphatic, while the verb is in the imperfect tense. One might say, “And I, even I, just kept weeping exceedingly.” When he realized the state of man before the holiness of God, he understood the eternal disconnect that stood between the two.

What seems like an easy walk in the presence of God while on earth is found to be a catastrophic, unhealable wound when standing before Him in heaven. John wept uncontrollably “because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll.”

The contents of the scroll remain securely closed from the eyes of all men. The inheritance lost by Adam is left unattainable. The words here have a sense of finality, like those of Leviticus 18:5 –

“You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the Lord.”

The promise was made. Men born under the law came and went, year after year. There were prophets, kings, priests, and holy men who lived under this law, and yet they all died. The grave received them and held them firmly in its grasp.

Because of the lack of worthiness in humanity, only life in a fallen world, followed by death and separation from God, is the result. The contents of the scroll are to remain forever out of the reach of the fallen sons of Adam. The infection of sin has precluded life from continuing either under the law or apart from it. Woe is the state of man without the intervention of God’s Christ!

What Revelation 5 has implicitly referred to is the doctrine of original sin. The effects of sin have permeated every person who was ever born. Only a sinless being would be qualified to replace the failings of Adam. But where would such a person come from?

Humans come from humanity. Humanity is stained with Adam’s sin. The equation seems to rule out any possible remedy. John’s pained tears continue to flood the minds of people to this day because they are recorded in God’s word.

We can look back on an ocean of tears that have flowed around the entire globe as new translations are prepared for people to read and consider their complete unworthiness before God. However, in hearing the gospel and understanding its message, hope is restored for those who understand what God has done for them.

This is because the message to John concerning his tears was, “Do not weep.” If the unworthiness to open the scroll of those in creation is what brought John to his current state, then the words “Do not weep” must provide a remedy to that state.

Without stopping to allow John to question why, the elder continued his words, saying, “Behold, the Lion.” In Scripture, the lion signifies various things depending on the type of lion and how it interacts with the surrounding context.

However, John's mind probably would have immediately scanned his knowledge of the Hebrew writings and focused on one particular reference. This is because the elder continued with the words "of the tribe of Judah."

This wasn't an actual lion then, but a metaphor for a Man, one who would come through, Judah, the fourth son of Israel. Every Jew who attended the synagogue would be familiar with the prophecy –

"Judah *is* a lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He bows down, he lies down as a lion;
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?
¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes;
And to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people." Genesis 49:9,10

The elder's words clearly identify the One being spoken of as the fulfillment of the prophecy from Genesis 49. John is being reminded of Scripture. In remembering the word of God, the downtrodden soul can refocus on what is good, right, and hope-filled.

This reminder may have then reminded John of other messianic prophecies seen in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as the promise of an everlasting throne being bestowed upon the line of David in 2 Samuel 7. It is to Judah that these great promises were made. Thus, this Lion of the Tribe of Judah is the fulfillment of those prophecies.

As a confirmation of this, the elder further describes this Lion as "the Root of David." As a note, this term is often wrongly applied by scholars to say that Christ is a root that springs out of David. This is incorrect.

A root is the basis for what springs out of it. A seed first goes down into the soil to find anchoring and moisture. From there, the roots are established, and the plant then proceeds upward.

Elsewhere, the Messiah is called a Branch, signifying One who would come from a plant, extending out. This would be a descendant. In this case, however, the Root refers to One who comes before.

Thus, not only does this One descend from Judah (and obviously from David who was given the kingly promises), but He is the Source of David – the Root. This is confirmed

later in Revelation 22 where Christ says He is both “the Root and the Offspring of David.” It is what is referred to in Matthew 22 –

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ⁴²saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”

They said to Him, “*The Son of David.*”

⁴³ He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:

⁴⁴ ‘The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at My right hand,

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?”

⁴⁵ If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” ⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

-Matthew 22:41-46

In His words, Jesus was showing that not only was the Christ to come from David, but He is also the Creator of David. It is of this One that the elder next calls out, saying that He “has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

The Greek word translated as “prevailed” signifies to overcome, overpower, or stand victorious. It is a word that implies the fighting of a battle. This One has been in a battle, and He has prevailed. In His prevailing, He has earned the right “to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

That which was sealed and inaccessible could now be made manifest. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has been found worthy! John, cease your tears. Let your heart rejoice, and in your rejoicing, multitudes will rejoice with you. There is hope!

What appeared to be a loss for humanity has become a victory, but only because of the intervention of God. The incarnation of Jesus Christ was the only hope for man because all men are conceived in sin through Adam, receiving his fallen nature.

All of the other beings in creation – be they spirit or animal – are in a different category, and they are unworthy to accomplish for man what man had to do. And so, Jesus came through a woman (He is fully Man) and by the Holy Spirit (He is fully God).

In this, He did not inherit Adam’s sin. He was qualified to accomplish the task set before Him. From there, the gospel shows that He was also capable of doing so. He was born sinless, and He lived without ever sinning.

In this, He prevailed. He is the great King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He is JESUS! And He has come to claim what is rightfully His. And yet, when He is to receive His scroll, the heavenly scene suddenly changes.

There, in the midst of the throne, it says there is “a Lamb as though it had been slain.” The words are paradoxical. How can a Lamb be standing despite being as if it had been slain?

The word translated as “Lamb” is the diminutive form of a sheep, thus it is a little lamb. There are two aspects to this then. The first is innocence. In the sacrificial system of Israel, this was what was required for the Passover lamb –

“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year.” Exodus 12:5

Further, the same thing is said of the twice-daily offering at the tabernacle/temple –

“Now this *is* what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. ³⁹One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight.” Exodus 29:38, 39

A first-year lamb conveys the idea of innocence. It is weak, cannot protect itself, and would normally follow its mother along, needing her to direct its every step. This one, however, is “as though it had been slain,” using the word *sphazó*. It signifies butchery for food or sacrifice.

Being in the midst of the throne, the focus of both the heavenly government and the earthly witness of God’s dealings with man is directed to this Lamb that was as if it had been sacrificed. And of this Lamb, John says it is “having seven horns and seven eyes.”

In the Old Testament, the horn comes from the word *qeren*. That is from the verb *qaran*, signifying “to send out rays,” meaning “to shine.” This then conveys the idea of prominence, exaltation, and strength. And this is how the horn is used in 2 Samuel (and elsewhere) –

“The Lord *is* my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;
³The God of my strength, in whom I will trust;
My shield and the horn of my salvation,
My stronghold and my refuge;
My Savior, You save me from violence.” 2 Samuel 22:2, 3

The eye, or in Hebrew *ayin*, is that which is outflowing, and thus that which gives an appearance. For example, a spring or fountain is called “an eye” because it is where water issues forth from.

Using this idea of appearance, the eye is used along with many descriptors – “an evil eye,” “a bountiful eye,” “the lust of the eyes,” “eyes full of adultery,” and so on. However, in this case, the appearance of the Lamb is that of innocence and substitutionary death, which is radiated out in power and exaltation.

Concerning the number, seven, it is the number of spiritual perfection (completeness). John takes these two things together, horns and eyes, and says that they “are the seven Spirits of God.”

These seven spirits of God reflect His perfect power, exaltation, and appearance. In other words, this Lamb reflects those attributes of God perfectly. In His being a Lamb (innocent), and in His being slain (substitutionary death), these attributes of God are perfectly revealed.

One can see a reflection of what the Lord said to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

Just as Christ’s strength is made perfect in weakness,” through the apostle, the perfection of God’s strength is displayed in the humility of Christ, the Lamb. It is this depiction of Christ by which the seven Spirits of God are “sent out into all the earth.”

It is the innocence (sinlessness) and death of Christ by which God has most purposefully revealed Himself. Despite all of the power, wonder, and majesty of the created order, the highest and most glorious expression of Himself, in all of time and in all of His handiwork, is in the innocent crucified Christ.

As for the scroll which is to be opened, it is a will or title deed. In Hebrews 9:16, it says, “...where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.” Jesus Christ gave up His perfect life to establish the New Covenant and to regain the title deed to fallen humanity.

The scroll that is to be opened will contain judgments upon the world, and the One who opens it will be the executor of those judgments. When they come, the people of the world will not be able to ask why the executor isn’t also participating in these judgments.

The record of His crucifixion testifies that He already has. He already took the judgments of God upon Himself so that the world could be saved. The rightful judgment and punishment we deserve were meted out to Him on behalf of those who will accept His payment.

Jesus Christ came in sinless perfection and lived without sin under the Law of Moses, a law that promises life to the man who can do the things of the law. Jesus performed under the law perfectly, and He gave His life in fulfillment of that law. Being sinless, He resurrected.

And because He was also made a substitutionary offering for the rest of humanity, those who come to Him through faith in what He has done will likewise be given eternal life. Those who don't will receive what they deserve for rejecting His gracious offer.

And those who have never heard the gospel message will have to stand on their own merits before God at the judgment. But it has already been seen that none are worthy. Inherited sin means that only the expectation and anticipation for us is that of being found guilty and then being eternally separated from God.

The concept of religious pluralism is completely dismissed when one understands what God in Christ has done. The idea of religious syncretism is found to be utterly repulsive when considered in the light of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Only Jesus is worthy because only Jesus is the God/Man. And as the Lord says in His word –

*"I am the Lord, that is My name;
And My glory I will not give to another"* Isaiah 42:8

Because of His worthiness, both in accomplishment and in glory, the slain Lamb came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

In the Greek, there is a change in the tenses of the verbs, which is skipped by most translations, and yet it makes the entire scene much more graphic. The Greek goes from the aorist to the perfect tense –

"And He came, and He has taken the scroll out of the right hand of Him who is sitting on the throne."

One can imagine anyone approved to do so coming before the throne, just as is seen in any royal setting. For example, Esther was granted permission to stand before King Ahasuerus in the book of Esther –

“Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. ⁴And the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king.” Esther 8:3, 4

In this heavenly scene of Revelation 5, the Lamb came before the One on the throne. He has been granted this royal privilege. But there is a specific reason for His approach. In His coming, it says, “and He has taken the scroll.”

One can see the definitive nature of the act. Not only did the Lamb come forward, but when He came, His worthiness was highlighted. The completed and definitive act of receiving the scroll, as indicated in the words “has taken,” demonstrates that it occurred and is fully accomplished. Worthy is the Lamb!

The metaphors are marvelous to consider. Christ is as a Lion. He is as a Lamb. He is the One on the throne. He possesses the scroll, and He passes it to Himself upon the completion of His earthly ministry.

God is revealing Himself through His Christ, but the account uses apocalyptic symbolism to convey aspects of Him. The lamb speaks of innocence. A slain lamb speaks of sacrifice. The innocence and the sacrifice are what have made His coming forward and taking the scroll possible.

In coming forward, this innocent One who was sacrificed (but who is obviously alive), is said to take the scroll “out of the right hand.” The right hand is the position of power and authority. Again, as cited before, this looks back to Jesus’ own words at the end of the book of Matthew –

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.’ Amen.” Matthew 28:18-20

God has returned this title deed to Himself through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He is the One on the throne, He is the Lamb that was slain, He is the Lion who has prevailed. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is in full view in this heavenly scene.

What is presented in Revelation 5 is a similar expression to what was already presented to Israel in Daniel 7 –

“I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, *One* like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.
¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one*
Which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7:13, 14

The right to receive and open the scroll has been given to the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who is the King of kings. This right has been given to the Lamb of God who fulfilled the law on behalf of fallen man, paying the penalty for their sins at the Cross of Calvary.

His blood was shed as a substitution for those who are willing to accept Him. The guilt is transferred, and the sins are removed. As such, the righteousness is then transferred from God to man.

Think of it! The infinite righteousness of God that is needed for man to again be in the presence of the infinitely righteous God is transferred to us through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Of what value is religious pluralism? Such a thought only expresses death leading to death.

But Jesus has won the victory and gained the right to the title deed. He alone has paid the price for those who call on Him. He offers mercy based on His paying this price, and He has provided the grace by exalting all who accept the call.

The choice is made and now the scroll can be opened. When it is, the entire earth will be affected by the result. Big events are on the horizon. The Lion has prevailed, and the Lamb has been found worthy. He is great, and He is glorious. He is JESUS!

As for the description of the slain lamb that came forward, saying that he has “seven horns and seven eyes,” these were explained as being “the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

In Revelation 4:5, it said, “Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” In other words, these “seven Spirits of God” that burned before the throne – illuminating the splendor of God – have now become the active agents of the Lamb that will go forth in judgment.

The eyes see every hidden thing and the horns will execute the judgment upon the unrepentant world. This Lamb will no longer be the meek and mild suffering Servant. He will become the One who comes to bring destruction to all who have rejected Him. He is the Lion *and* the Lamb. He is Jesus.

The cure and the remedy to our fallen state is found in God’s giving of His Son to pay the sin debt we as humans owe. The portrayal of the wrath of God, which is so often found in the Bible, does not mean that God’s nature is wrathful.

Rather, it means that our sin brings about a state of enmity between the perfectly loving God and ourselves. Wrath, as we perceive it from Scripture, is the natural outcropping of sin not being dealt with. God’s perfection necessarily demands our perfection.

Because God’s perfection can only be realized in us through the eradication of imperfection, there must be a means by which this can be realized. This is the process that the Bible speaks of and reveals.

When man was created, he was in a state of perfection. However, he was also in a state of lack, something that is not an imperfection. To lack nothing would mean we were God. Lack is a state of existence we all possess.

One thing man lacked was the knowledge of good and evil. Without this knowledge, man cannot appreciate God in a manner that provides reciprocal love and respect. God saw that the correcting of this lack was worth the trouble that would naturally accompany its acquisition.

And so, God gave man a law. In disobeying that law, which God knew would take place, man “missed the mark” of perfection. In other words, sin entered the world. It is this state of imperfection that requires the process of reacquiring perfection.

The giving of more law, meaning the Law of Moses, didn’t help the situation for Israel. Rather, it only exacerbated it. But it was a necessary step. In fulfilling the law, Christ Jesus was able to bring us back to the state of perfection that God requires.

This is because Jesus is God. Therefore, those in Christ are now included in His perfect righteousness, the righteousness of God. There is no more “missing the mark” because there is no more law by which that can take place.

This is why no other religious expression can restore us to God. They fail to deal with the state of sin in man. They may address the issue, but they fall short of the necessary requirements of God, which can only stem from Himself.

What God in Christ has done is not something arbitrary or random, as if it can also come about in some other way. Rather, it is pinpointed, targeted, and mutually exclusive of any other path or attempt at reconciliation.

Any other avenue, by default, includes the work of others because it does not rely solely on God. This is why the Bible says –

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God,* ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8, 9

When you think about religion in your life, think logically, soberly, and carefully. In so doing, you will desire what God has done through Christ Jesus. It is the necessary process that will lead you to the necessary perfection that will restore you to God. This is because it is accomplished through our Savior. And our Savior is JESUS!

This past week remembered the Passion of Jesus. Friday remembered His crucifixion. Today, we remember His resurrection. Each of these demonstrates to us that we have value in the sight of God.

I wonder how that can be possible when I think of my own fallen and sin-stained life before Him. And yet, even though I question why God would save me, I do not question that He did. He went through the entire process of redemption, culminating in Jesus’ cross and resurrection. As this is so, I know with every fiber of my being that I have been saved.

May you carry this reassurance with you always as you live in the presence of God, sealed with His Holy Spirit because you trusted – by faith – in the full, finished, final, and forever-sufficient work of our Lord. He is JESUS!

Closing Verse: *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the*

point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippines 2:5-11

Next Week: Song of Songs 5:1-8 *Pretty great stuff, fer sher...* (My Hands Dripped Myrrh)
(12th Song of Songs sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

A Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

This is the gospel which was preached to you
It is also the one you received and on which you stand
It is the gospel of salvation, providing life that's new
And which will carry you to the promised Holy Land

What is delivered to you is what was before received
That Christ died for our sins according to God's word
He was buried and He rose, and so we have believed
And many witnesses testify to this message you have heard

Now, if Christ is preached that He is risen from the dead
How can some among you say the resurrection isn't true?
If there is no resurrection after Christ was crucified and bled
Then our faith as well as yours is certainly askew

And if so, we are found false witnesses of God
Because we have wrongly testified of this mighty deed
And our faith is futile, no heavenly streets we'll trod
And we are still dead in our sins; fallen Adam's seed

Even more, those who have fallen asleep in the Lord are gone
And we are the most pitiable creatures the world could ever look upon

But indeed, Christ is risen from the dead
He is the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep

And as death came through one man, Adam, our federal head
So Christ will make all alive; our souls He will keep

There is an order to the Resurrection call
Christ was first, the pattern for the rest when He comes
When He does, He will make a shout out to us all
And we will rise as if to the sound of heavenly battle drums

Then comes the time, when He delivers the kingdom to the Father
When all rule, authority, and power have come to an end
The last enemy to be destroyed is death, never more to bother
Then the Son will to the Father eternal rule extend

But you ask, "What will we be like after our time of sleep?
After we have been buried in corruption's pit so deep?"

Our body is sown in dishonor, but it will be raised in glory
It is sown in weakness, but raised in power – the resurrection story

The first man Adam became a living being, it is true
The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit, life to me and you

And as was the man of dust, created so long ago
So are those likened unto him, also made of dust
And as is the Man, the Lord from heaven, you know
That we shall bear His image for eternity just as we've discussed

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God
Nor can corruption inherit that which is incorrupt
Be we shall all be changed, and so, heavenly streets we'll trod
In the twinkling of an eye, the change will be abrupt

When the last trumpet sounds, we will be taken to glory
We shall all be changed, completion of the gospel story

Where O Death, O where is your sting?
When Christ our Savior, us to Himself does He bring

Where O Hades, O where is your victory?
When Christ translates His children to eternal glory

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin the law
But thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord
My beloved brethren be steadfast in all you've heard and saw
And cling confidently to God's eternal word

Know for certain that your labor is not in vain
Be of good cheer, Christ is coming again

Hallelujah and Amen...