

Current Affairs #52 – The Authority of the Four Living Creatures

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Now, I interrupted the flow of things I had been speaking about before, from the fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Revelation, speaking about heaven—John being taken into heaven, and seeing heaven, and seeing the Lamb being presented with the scroll, or actually, the Lamb coming and taking the scroll out of the hand of the pre-existent Christ. Obviously, once the scroll is taken, one expects that the seven seals are going to be broken, with the intent of revealing everything that had been sealed. This is about as definitive a reference to the declaration of prophetic Scriptures, which in their turn would be the means by which the future of mankind upon the earth would be orchestrated.

You will note that this is done in heaven; however, all of the events that are revealed, with the exception of a picture of the Lamb and the ones following the Lamb, by and large, all of the events spoken to happen upon the earth. So, there is this interconnection, obviously, between heaven and earth. Heaven is the repository of symbolic and prophetic books and writings and records, but the earth is the location upon which these written things are meant to be revealed. So, there is an absolute connection between heaven and earth. That is why, in the beginning, God did not just create the heavens, and God did not just create the earth; He created the heavens and the earth. They are both created, and they were both created in the same epoch because one is the custodian of that which is meant to affect the other. Heaven is the *locus in quo*, the location in which things are held, almost as held in trust, for the appointed time in which they will be revealed out of heaven.

When it was time for Jesus to come, for example, “In the books in which it is written, a body You have prepared for Me” (cf. Hebrews 10:5-7). Books in the Scriptures are scrolls; by and large, they are scrolls. Today, books are bound, but what we go on is not the form of the writing but what is contained. There were seven seals upon this scroll that contained the future (and there are scrolls in heaven). When it was time for the coming of Jesus on the earth, a particular scroll was opened and, in that scroll, there was the writing, “A body You have prepared for Me.” And so, Jesus aligned Himself with the requirement of that scroll, and God provided that body in the womb of a young woman named, Mary, who was a virgin betrothed to be married to Joseph. She, in the due course, brought forth a Son. The angels announced from heaven that the coming of this Son would change the course of history because that was an appointed time when the Redeemer, promised

before the foundations of the earth, would come into time and space. So, heaven is the location where the things that are in the mind of God to be brought forth on the earth are deposited first.

Do not fail to understand: God is bigger than heaven and earth. Heaven and earth are contained in God. So there are things that, then, God hides within Himself for long ages past. But in the appointed time, He moves these things from their place of being hidden in Himself and brings them first into heaven, to await the time when they are to come into the earth. Now you say, “You are finding a lot of just very esoteric things.” No. These things are plainly said in the Scriptures. Consider the book of Ephesians, the third chapter, where it says, “That which God had hidden in Himself for long ages past. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God would be made known to principalities and powers in the heavenly realms, which He accomplished in Christ” (cf. Ephesians 3:9-11). So, there are things that are *not* written in heaven. There are books in heaven. There is a book of knowledge, for example, that is referred to in the book of Daniel: “For these are written in the books,” the angel Gabriel told him. So, there are those things. There is a Lamb’s book of life in heaven. There are scrolls like the one that we are seeing now being opened, and so on. But apart from those things, there are things hidden in God, outside of heaven, outside of the earth, outside of creation. When it is time, God moves those things into creation and the order of their coming is, typically, first into heaven, and then, subsequently, out of heaven to come into the earth.

That is why, for example, the stars were set in the heavens for signs and seasons. This is the book of Genesis, contemporaneous with the creation of the heavens and the earth. God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to shine light upon the earth, and let them be for signs and seasons, in addition to, for days and years” (cf. Genesis 1:14-15). So, when things move out of the invisible heavens to come and to appear in the visible heavens, and subsequently, to be manifested tangibly upon the earth, the heavens will declare the glory of God. So much so, that as I said at the end of Current Affairs #50, when it was time for Jesus to be born, the star of Bethlehem arose; and I went into that before. So, it actually functions. But then, apart from what is written in the books, there are things hidden in God.

When it is time for great prophetic shifts and changes to occur upon the earth, the books are opened. Anytime that it is necessary, anytime that the time has come for the stage of things to move from heaven to come into the earth, the books in which these things are written are opened. Now, the Lamb's book of life is not opened yet. It will be opened on a certain day by the very One whom they pierced, and all the dead, small and great, will be judged by the things that are written in the book. But that is not yet. That is a scroll yet to be opened.

But at the beginning of chapter 4 of the book of Revelation, John was invited to "Come up here," meaning in heaven, and to sit and "to see things that would come to pass after this."¹ "After this" had reference to the first three chapters of Revelation, in which those things were said to come to pass "soon" or "shortly." So there is the soon or shortly, but these things were not the subject of the opening of a scroll or a book of any kind. John was told by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself because the book of Revelation is the revelation that God gave to Christ upon the completion of His role as the Lamb of God. God gave those things to Him. So that is why there are some things that Jesus says (while He is on earth, before His return to heaven) that He does not know. For example, He did not know the day of His own return while He was on the earth (cf. Matthew 24:36). But revelation is that; He was subsequently given the revelation. Why? What were the changed circumstances? He had completed His earthly assignment. So that is why He appears in heaven as a Lamb who looks as if He had been slain.² And with that, not only is He given the revelation and shows up on the island of Patmos and reveals, first, things that were to shortly come to pass to John, but then He invites him into heaven to observe the opening of the scroll or to observe the taking of the scroll by the Lamb who now has the authority to open the scrolls.³

It irritates me when I hear preachers say, "Jesus does not know the day of His own return." How foolish. And they quote Matthew 24:36. Yes. It does say that, but that is not all it says. Beyond that time, the Lamb comes and takes the scroll. Who is the Lamb? He is the One who was speaking in Matthew 24. Now He comes, subsequent to returning to heaven. Revelation, chapter 4, shows the Lamb coming forth. "Do not weep," John is told, "for the Lion of the tribe of Judah has overcome, and He is worthy to take the scroll and to open the seals" (cf. Revelation 5:5). So, what is written in the scrolls? Everything up to the culmination of the bride bringing forth the glory of God on the earth in the form of a fully mature son, to the measure of the fullness of the stature of

Christ. So do not tell me He does not know the day of His own return. That is foolishness. It flies in the face of Scripture. It is not accurate. It was accurate when He said it, but like many things, heaven is not static.

Heaven is not unchanging, and we see an example of the changing nature of heaven to accommodate, from its staging area, that which God is bringing forth upon the earth. Now, we should get these things in our thinking. This is not a time anymore for foolishness and for juvenile thinking. This is a time for the message of wisdom among the mature, because we are not like those who are perishing. If you insist on traditional doctrines, this day will overtake you as a thief. But you are not of the darkness. I am quoting 1 Thessalonians. You are not of the darkness. It should not overtake you.⁴ And the thing that highlights what God is doing are these prophetic symbols.

When the Lamb takes the scroll that is sealed with seven seals and is written on both sides, what do you expect will happen? Why is John invited up? He is invited up to witness the opening of the scrolls and the revealing of that which had been sealed—had the signet seal of the Almighty God on them so that they could not be opened by any unauthorized person, including angels and men, but by the One who, in His obedient life, had overcome and was therefore worthy to open the scrolls. And all heaven reverberated with that *new* song.⁵

Now, I want us to go to where He begins to open the scrolls. Because, you see, He is telling us what are the events from a heavenly point of view, which is to say, what is behind the scenes. Humans will experience, on the earth, the effects of these things, but it does not necessarily mean they will know the origins of these things. In which case, if you do not, you will be tossed to and fro by every sentiment and everything that is occurring at the time, without understanding. But if you are given understanding, then you will know how to engage the times in which you live. So as He opens the seven seals, He begins the process of revealing that which leads up to the coming forth of the fully mature Body of Christ upon the earth, which is the whole purpose for creation.

I want to read from Revelation 6:1. John is speaking, and He says,

Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see” (Revelation 6:1 NKJV).

Who are the four living creatures, again? That is the representation of the corporate man. I have extensive teachings on this subject. These are the four living creatures who have the four faces, like a lion, an eagle, an ox, or a man. They show up previously in the book of Ezekiel (cf. Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10). They speak of those who move on the earth, the wheel within the wheel and eyes within the wheel, and they operate from right under the throne of God. When they stop, in Ezekiel, the heavens open and they are under the throne.⁶ What does that mean? They are the picture of the corporate man who operates by the authority of the throne of God. That is the four living creatures.

You know, the problem with understanding the book of Revelation, for many, is that they take it without context. Many of the things, all of the important symbols of the book of Revelation—a prophetic book, therefore it is written in symbols referencing types and shadows—all, every one of the major symbols of the book of Revelation have been previously referenced in other prophetic works throughout the Scriptures. And it is not just the major things. Many of the things that are in, perhaps, a category just slightly below the major symbols are also referred to throughout the Scriptures, and one of them is the four living creatures. You will remember, they are right around the throne. They encircle the throne where the Lamb has been presented and where the One who holds the scroll, the Eternal God, is seated—right next to Him. What does that mean? It means they are the closest in authority and in the reflection of the glory and authority of the throne: the four living creatures—the face like the lion, like the eagle, like the ox, like the man.

Around those four, in more or less a supportive role, are the twenty-four elders. This speaks of the government of God in heaven and on earth. So, the government exists to bring order to that which is represented by the corporate man, because we are talking about a Kingdom, an orderly administration of divine intentionality.

It is significant to note that it is the four living creatures speaking with one voice, and it is like thunder. When four voices speak as one voice, it is the sound of many waters. And the voice of

God is the sound of many waters. Look, the understanding of these things will be first brought forth upon the earth in and through the corporate man. That is what I am saying. They are the first ones to signal the times and the changing seasons: “Come and see.” Why? Because the times and the seasons are changing. And the revelation of the changed times and seasons are given primarily, first to the church, to the Body of Christ, to this corporate entity because we are supposed to tell the world. We are supposed to enlighten the world as to the doings of God to invite them into the refuge and safety of God, out of the kingdom of darkness. That is why we have such a preeminent position.

Imagine sacrificing *that* preeminence for ‘living your best life now’—for a jet or a vacation house, thinking that that is all there is until you get to heaven. Why, that is selling your birthright for a bowl of soup. That is profanity. The Scriptures say, “For Esau was a profane person.”⁷ Why? Because he sold his inheritance for the convenience of his existence. This prosperity gospel is selling these glorious things—to be the spokesman, to be able to announce when God is doing something on the earth, to be light to the world—for bowls of soup. As if that is the preoccupation of God. He will give us everything we need for life and godliness. But this is a grade far above anything these fellows who propagate this foolish gospel have ever even thought of.

The four living creatures can say, “Come and see.” I promise you, the world is not going to be interested in your accumulation of wealth in a day of distress, because wealth in that day does not mean a thing. It will not protect you from anything. It will not keep you from anything. But those who can declare the counsel of God, they will be the wise men. They will be like lights in the darkness. They will represent the indispensable value among human beings in the earth. You will reap what you sow. If you have only sought after trinkets, then that is what you will get. But if you have sought the Lord, you will be included amongst those who are in the innermost circle of the throne, to whom first the message of what God is doing is given, and you will get to say, “Come and see.”

Now, what is to be seen is not necessarily pleasant, but we are not in a time of pleasantries. John said,

And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer (Revelation 6:2 NKJV).

There are two white horses in the chapters of Revelation. In chapter 19 there is another rider on a white horse.⁸ This One has a sharp sword that comes out of His mouth, and He is called the Word of God. His robe is dipped in blood and on His robe and on His thigh is a name written. There is no mistaking who that rider is. His name is KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, and He leads the armies of heaven.

Now, that is not *this* rider from Revelation 6:2.

- “And I looked, and behold, a white horse.”—This rider sits on a white horse, which historically is associated with leading an army and being the distinctive color of the authority of the leader. The typical historic position of the leader of an army that is in the field, where there are horses in the army, the typical position of that rider who leads is on a white horse. So, this is some kind of a leader.
- “He who sat on it had a bow;”—Now interestingly, I will skip over for a moment that he carries a bow as opposed to a sword. Because the One, the great champion who rides (in Revelation 19) has a sword that comes out of His mouth; this one has a bow.
- “and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer”— Now he has a crown on his head, and it says a crown was *given* to him. So, he did not inherently possess a crown; one was given to him. That is important because, there are two words that signify “crown.”
 - The normal word for crown is diadem. In the Greek, it is *diadéma* (Strong’s Greek 1238), and it references a hereditary crown, such as that kings wear—one who has access to kingly rule.
 - But this crown is called *stephanos* (Strong’s Greek 4735). We get the name, Stephen, from it. It references someone who, in the Greek Games, was referred to as the *Victor Ludorum*. There would be a series of events in which one would compete, and if he triumphed in all the events or had the highest number of points, he would be the *Victor Ludorum*. *Laudo* is to praise; so, the *Victor Ludorum* is the

celebrated athlete of the games. That is like the winner of the decathlon in the current Olympic games. That is the crown he has: a crown from his own striving.

We will continue from there when we return.

Endnotes:

1. See Revelation 4:1 NKJV: “After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’”
2. See Revelation 5:6 NKJV: “And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”
3. See Revelation 5:7 NKJV: “Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.”
4. See 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6 NKJV: “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.”
5. See Revelation 5:8-10 NKJV: “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying:

‘You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood

Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.”

6. See Ezekiel 1:26 NKJV: “And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it.”; see also Ezekiel 10:1 NKJV: “And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne.”
7. See Hebrews 12:16 NKJV: “...lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.”
8. See Revelation 19:11-16 NKJV: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.”