

New Song & New Authority (Rev 5:9-10)



'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 will reign on the earth.' (Rev 5:9-10).

This is the new song unceasingly sung in heaven since the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ to the right hand of God in the last 2000 years:

1. Are We in Agreement with the New Song of Heaven?

- a. *Jesus is worthy to take the scroll and open its seals (Rev 5:9).* This signals a season of intense spiritual conflict on earth. Is Jesus opening the scroll today?
 - (i) White horse (Rev 6:1-2) – deception (censorship, narrative-driven news media, CNN rating drop by more than 80% in a year)
 - (ii) Red horse (Rev 6:3-4) – *'and it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth...'* Vaccine mandate/political/ideological warfare
 - (iii) Black horse (Rev 6:5-6) – famine (global supply shortage looming + Economic unrest with rising inflation with near-zero FFR)
 - (iv) Pale horse (Rev 6:7-8) – death and hades following suit (3 major flashpoints of war – Israel/Iran; China/Taiwan; Russia/USA (over Ukraine))

We are seeing the *preliminary signs* of these horses running on a global scale already. *What is our heart's response to this?* Is our heart in agreement with heaven's agenda? Most people are not in agreement with this new song. Jesus must break the seals to close this age and bring His kingdom on earth.

- b. Praise for Christ's work of redemption out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation (Rev 5:9), i.e. proclamation of the gospel to all nations. C.f. Matt 24:14
- c. Saints must take their place in the heavenly realm as kings and priests with Christ (Rev 5:10).

2. Redemption of the Nations & Priestly Function of the Church

- a. The redemption of every tribe, tongue, people and nation is directly connected to the church taking her position as kings and priests with Christ in the heavenly places. The most urgent issue for the nations in the last days is the spiritual authority in the church.

What does it mean to take our position as kings and priests with Christ? We learn to rule with Christ in heavenly places by offering pure unadulterated spiritual sacrifices to God – 'thanksgiving', 'praise' (Ps 8:2), 'worship', 'prayer/petition', 'intercession', and 'proclamation.' The extent to which we rule with Christ in the millennium corresponds to the extent to which we learn to rule with Christ in this life.

- b. The greatest spiritual weapon for us Christians is our tongue. That is why Satan's tactic is to silence the church – no singing, no public prayer - this neutralises the church's spiritual weapon which is mighty in God. The *'perfect praise'* silences the enemy's accusation against us and releases spiritual strength. Our tongue is our glory. (Ps 30:11-12, Ps 16:9, c.f. Acts 2:26) We need a clear vision of the throne of God.

3. We Must Put on the Beautiful Priestly Garment of Praise

- a. *Is 52:1-2 - 'Awake, awake, Zion, clothe yourself with strength! Put on your garments of splendour, Jerusalem, the holy city...Shake off your dust; rise up, sit enthroned, Jerusalem.'* (NIV, Is 53:1-2)

This passage describes God's call to Zion to shake off the dust and be clothed with the garment of strength and splendour for the great end-time redemption of God! This is the garment of praise, which is the priestly garment in the presence of God.

Is 61:3 – '[Jesus Christ came] to give them (i) beauty for ashes, (ii) the oil of joy for mourning, (iii) the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (spirit of despair/depression).'

- b. Esther 4:1-2 – Mordecai could not enter into the king’s gate in sackcloth and ashes. Esther 5:1-2 – However after finishing her fast and prayer, Esther put on the royal garment of splendour and went into the presence of the king and obtained the mercy and redemption for the people of God. That is the picture of God’s people in the last days. We as the bride of Christ have access to His throne to obtain mercy in time of need.

Remember that joyful prayer, praise and thanksgiving put you directly under the will of God. *‘Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.’ (1 Thess 5:16-18)*

4. Enthroned on the Triumphant Seat in the Heavenly Place

- a. Triumph of Christ: Col 2:13-15 – *‘And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.’*

What is the Roman triumph? It is the highest honour the Roman senators could give to victorious generals in war. In a public procession in the city square, the general’s chariot was followed by great displays of the spoils of war. Where are we seated? 2 Cor 2:14 – *‘Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.’ (NIV – ‘in Christ’s triumphal procession’)* We are not on the sidewalk clapping, but in the chariot with Jesus on His triumphant procession. How? As we thank Him and praise Him, we join with Him on the chariot.

- b. Praise report for my mother who was very ill with severe chest pain and extreme exhaustion

(She suspects vaccine side effects.) After much prayer of the church last Friday night, she recovered immediately. She did not know we were praying for her in that hour, but suddenly she felt ‘coolness’ in her chest. Then she felt hungry, so she got up and eat some food. She slept very well. She has been fine since last Friday. Praise the Lord. What would have happened if no one prayed for her? I encourage everyone to be part of one or two small prayer groups in the church.

5. The Pattern of Early Church’s Priestly Authority

- a. Acts 4:25-26, 31 - The early church started with persecution. The religious authority tried to silence the church. They arrested Peter and John and threatened them to speak no more in Jesus’ name. The early church responded by holding a closed prayer meeting in a room. Prophetic insight was given to them from Ps 2 – *‘Why did the nations rage, and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the LORD and against His Christ.’ ... And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.’*
- b. Acts 12:1-4, 20-24 - Herod Agrippa 1, a close friend of the mad emperor Caligula persecuted the church fiercely. He executed James and planned to kill Peter also. But his plan failed because the church prayed behind the closed door. An angel of the Lord intervened and freed Peter from prison. Furthermore, Herod Agrippa 1 was struck dead by another angel soon afterwards. He died eaten up by worms in a public view. This is the power of a praying church.
- c. Acts 16:23-30 - Paul and Silas in Philippi were thrown into maximum security prison after being beaten for preaching the gospel. But there Paul and Silas praised God at midnight, and it released the power of God in a great earthquake. It shook the entire security prison and opened everyone’s chains. What was the power that opened the prison doors and broke every chain? The sacrifice of praise. Did Paul and Silas feel like praising the Lord? Probably not, but their praise released God’s power and turned things around.

I believe we have a very exciting and challenging year ahead. Let us put on the priestly garment of praise and enter into God’s presence. Let us take our seat in Christ’s triumphal procession to spread His aroma everywhere we go. The proclamation of the gospel and the prayer and intercession of the church behind the closed doors go hand in hand – not in competition with each other.