The End

完結篇

Revelation 5:6-14 5/4/2025

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Dear brothers and sisters, peace!

Yesterday, at the memorial service, we commemorated Sister Qiuyan together. Facing death, our hearts were filled with grief. As “Song of a Thousand Winds” says, “I am not there; I have become the wind, blowing past you.” Though people depart, their memories and their love continue to stir and echo in our hearts.

But today, in this Sunday gathering, we do not remain only in remembrance; we turn toward our hope—the hope of resurrection. Yesterday’s memorial service offered us comfort and reflection. Today’s Sunday worship, we see that death is not the end; the resurrection of the Lord Jesus has opened the door to eternal life.

Illumination Prayer:

Lord God, we wish to enter the world of Revelation. We desire to be attentive, learning under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. May You lead both the speaker and the listeners. We earnestly pray, relying on the name of Jesus Christ.

Today we will continue to receive God’s comfort and hope from the Scripture Revelation 5:6–14.

**I. The Victorious Lamb—Christ’s Resurrection and Authority**

In this passage of Revelation, we see one like a slain Lamb standing before the throne. This Lamb is Jesus Christ. This text is extremely important to us, for it declares not only Christ’s resurrection but also His authority and glory.

“The Lamb came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.” (Revelation 5:7)

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, many may have thought His mission was over. But in fact, this was the beginning of His work to save the world. His death made Him the “Lamb who was slain,” but His resurrection made Him the “victorious Lamb.” He is no longer the one who suffers, but the King of kings seated on the throne.

This is great comfort. No matter how much or how deep our suffering, we know that our Lord has already overcome death. He leads us to eternal life and has prepared for us an everlasting home in heaven.

**II. The Prayers of the Saints and Heavenly Worship**

In verse 8 of this passage, we see the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders holding golden bowls full of incense, which represent the prayers of the saints. They fall down before Jesus Christ and offer worship to Him.

This scene shows us that all believers, whether living or dead, are fully accepted before God. In our past earthly lives, our prayers, our worship, even our sufferings and efforts, are regarded by God as precious incense. Today, our worship—or yesterday’s memorial for loved ones—is likewise treasured before God, like fragrant incense.

As we grieve here, we should remember that our sorrow is not hopeless, for our prayers and all our remembrances are accepted and cherished by God. Before the Lord, all of this will be turned into the hope of life.

**III. Death Is Not the End; Resurrection Is the Ultimate Victory**

At the end of this passage, all the angels and saints sing together:

“Worthy is the Lamb to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Revelation 5:12)

This is not only praise to Jesus Christ but also a proclamation of the eternal life He brings. Death cannot claim us, because Jesus Christ has opened the door to eternal life. Death is not the end; resurrection is the ultimate victory.

Today’s text invites us to reflect on a very important theme in Revelation: the human conclusion, theologically called “eschatology,” meaning “the last things.”

Christian faith emphasizes the kingdom of heaven on earth and the importance of the present, while also focusing on the future and eschatology. There is a dialectical relationship between now and the future. Our present life affects the outcome of the last days. The awareness of the last things begins from now. As T. S. Eliot wrote, “The end is where we start from.”

Today’s Scripture—the latter half of chapter 5—presents a beautiful vision of the end times, depicting the last days filled with singing and praise

In the first half, John weeps with tears because in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, no one could open or look at the scroll concerning the future. He could not see the future, was full of sorrow about the future, and realized that the future was not in our hands but in someone else’s.

What will tomorrow be like?

Where will our church go? Will young people come into the church? Our nation’s political and social policies and destiny have great uncertainty and variables—future job markets, the amount of student loans, incurable diseases…

In our anxiety about the future, what kind of future we can look forward to?

The vision John saw is shocking. What he saw was not a little lamb with wool white as snow, but the Lamb of God with wool red as blood—a slaughtered lamb standing.

The Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, was killed yet still stands. That weak, wounded yet powerful Lamb, with his pierced hands, holds the future.

He is worthy—meaning he has the ability and authority to open the scroll of the future. His hand governs the future. That is God giving us our future. He not only manages the future; he is also the center of our future vision. He governs the end; he is our conclusion.

He is the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega. Although we do not know the future, God is all-knowing. We long to know some of the future details in the scroll, but we cannot see them. However, we can know some things about the Lamb.

The Lamb of God—beyond the Passover lamb or the sacrificial lamb—this one who holds the scroll is the One who turns us from weeping into singing, from sorrow into joy, from heavy burdens into happiness and delight.

God’s sacrifice in Christ makes a way for us to the door of the future. Once this Lamb appears and takes the scroll, the feast of praise begins: the beautiful strings of music start to play, and the golden censer is filled with incense—the incense of the saints’ prayers.

When we know the Lamb holds our future, this is the most fitting response. We see one of the Bible’s greatest climaxes—a scene of glorious praise.

This wounded conductor of the heavenly choir is our Savior, standing in His slain posture at the center of the grand chorus, directing the victorious songs of heaven.

The most fundamental vocation of a Christian life is worship. Not only our choir but all creation: “in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and on the sea, all created things and everything in them, saying, ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power be to him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’” There is a holy chorus at the heights—the universe of creation singing and worshiping at the end.

Singing is very important and beautiful. Augustine said, “He who sings, prays twice.” The vision of singing in this passage shows love for the slaughtered Lamb and for God. In the end times, there is singing, because in the end times there is love and there is God—nothing is better than singing to Him.

Revelation is like history’s conclusion. But through Christ, the end truly begins—in the eternal world, Christ’s ever-present light never ends.

The end is the beginning for God’s creatures to live and worship. Eastern Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemann’s phrase *homo adorans* means: man is a worshiping being, the priest of all creation. The first question of the seventeenth-century Westminster Catechism tells us: “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”

In the end—the so-called “conclusion”—the goal of our lives is to be people of praise. May we understand that Brahms’s Requiem begins by saying, “Surely there is a conclusion for me; that is the purpose of my life.”

This conclusion begins now, with each song we sing. Those who follow Christ, if without song and praise, will falter. But if we sing, we taste the future in advance; our future and our conclusion are held in Christ’s wounded hands.

We sing, entrusting our future to Him, showing that we commit our ending to Him and trust Him. Regarding the last things, there is much mystery. But we can at least be certain of two things: 1. Christ is our end; and 2. we will sing at the end.

Therefore, as we continue to sing in worship, we sing because we remember our future reunion and fellowship. Remember that there is a future over there, which Christ governs and guides, and until that day we will join all the saints in singing forever in glory: “This is the feast of victory for our God… the Lamb who was slain begins to reign. This is the feast of victory for our God.”

Walking in the hope of resurrection, death cannot swallow our love, for love comes from God and abides with Him. Whatever we experience, whatever loved ones have departed, the Lord’s promise gives us eternal hope.

Today, with faith in the resurrection, let us continue on our way with awe for life, looking forward to reuniting with our loved ones in the kingdom of heaven. Let us live in the Lord’s peace and face each day with hope.

Resurrection is not a future reality—it is today’s power. Believing in Jesus’ resurrection will change our attitude toward life today.

We do not fear death, because the Lord has already won the victory.

We do not cling to anything in this world, because we know the best is yet to come.

We can also learn to let go, trusting that those we love are in the Lord’s embrace.

Hope is not fantasy; it is the Gospel. Dear brothers and sisters, perhaps you have wondered, “Where is the one I love now?”

One day we will meet again—not as wind, not as stars, but with resurrected bodies and eternal life.

Our Christian hope is not mere poetry; it is the cross, the empty tomb, the Lord’s promise.

May the Lord help us live lives of hope, and spread this good news of resurrection to comfort more who weep. May the Lord’s peace be with you. Amen.