

Our Glorious Destiny – Revelation 5:10

I. INTRODUCTION

A. King Arthur

1. For a long time I've been in love with the story of King Arthur.
2. My first exposure to it was as a young child when I went to see the Disney film, *The Sword in the Stone*.
3. Ever since then, I've enjoyed reading novels about *Camelot* and even done some research into the roots of the Arthurian legend.
4. I guess what intrigues me most about the story is how Arthur's life *began*; you know the story.
 - a. he was the son of the King of England, but was whisked away as a mere infant to be raised in the home of the knight, Sir Kay.
 - b. as he grew, he had no inkling of his true identity.
 - c. in fact, he had a bit of a hard time at the hands of his foster brothers.
 - d. Arthur grew up knowing more the life of a servant than a prince.
5. But the day came when he faced a special challenge that revealed his *true identity* as the rightful King of England.
6. His early years of *humble service* proved to be of invaluable help in shaping the character of his reign – the *Golden Age of Camelot*, where virtue and honor were the main thing.

B. Something Deep Within

1. The legend of King Arthur is appealing to many, and has proven to be one of the foundational myths of the English speaking world, *because it stirs* something deep within us.
2. There is within the soul of *every* human being the sense that there's far more to life than just what we see.
3. We feel a sense of *destiny* – a great stirring that we're *more* than what the world tells us we are.
4. We sense that we're called to a future *greatness*, but we don't now what it is, and are easily distracted from it.
5. We find our true identity and glorious destiny in our text today –

II. TEXT

A. Recap

1. We pick it up this morning where we left off last week.
2. The Apostle John is having a vision of being in heaven and standing before the throne of God.
3. He sees God the Father holding the title deed to Earth in His right hand, and Jesus as the Lamb of God, coming to take it.
4. The time has finally arrived for Jesus to take possession of that which rightly belongs to Him.

B. Vs. 8-10

⁸Now 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. ⁹And 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,

¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”

1. When Jesus takes the scroll, all heaven breaks out in worship. (cf. v. 11-13)
2. The 24 elders hold golden bowls that are full of incense, representing the prayers of God’s people – who for generations have prayed, “Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven.”
3. Jesus is now moving to answer that prayer in its fullness.
 - a. He will come as *King*,
 - b. to re-establish the throne of David and rule over all the kingdoms of the Earth.
4. The elders sing –

“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,

- a. from this we learn the *identity* of the elders.
 - b. they are God's people, the redeemed from every age -
 - c. who have looked to God in faith, trusting in His mercy and grace.
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- d. if you have a NIV or one of the newer translations, you'll notice the text here is a bit different from what I read –
 - 1) instead of the song being in the first-person, it's in the *third-person*.
 - 2) the elders sing, “with your blood you purchased men for God” instead of “us for God.”
 - e. the NIV version of v. 10 comes from *only 2* early manuscripts; the vast majority of ancient manuscripts have the traditional

King James reading, so we really ought to stick with it. [\[1\]](#)

- 5. The elders represent the saints of all ages who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ from every nation, kindred, tribe and language.
- 6. It's their song in v. 10 that I want to focus on this morning. They sing -

[You] have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.

C. From – To

- 1. Last week we focused on what Jesus has redeemed us *from*.
 - a. just as the Passover lamb redeemed the Jews from bondage to slavery in Egypt –
 - b. Jesus is the Great & Final Passover Lamb who takes away the sins of the world and saves us from bondage to sin and death.
- 2. Here in v. 10, the elders proclaim what we've been redeemed *TO!*
- 3. They say – “**[You] have made us kings and priests to our God.**”
- 4. We are *kings* because as the born again children of God, we've become part of a royal family.
 - a. Jesus is the *Root of David*, as it says in v. 5
 - b. He is the One who will restore King David's throne and rule as the rightful King of Earth.
 - c. in Romans 8:17 Paul tells us that we are *heirs of God* and *joint-heirs with Jesus Christ*.
 - d. that means that what Jesus has inherited we've inherited as

- well! – we are *joint-heirs* with Him!
e. in fact, Jesus promised this to us in 3:21;

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

- f. Paul puts it this way in Ephesians 2:4-6 - (turn there)

God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ . . . ⁶and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

5. My beloved brothers and sisters – this is holy ground and I ask that you give the most earnest attention to these words.
- a. notice the tense of the verbs Paul uses here in Ephesians 2
 - b. v. 5 – “even when we were dead in trespasses,”
 - 1) when was that?
 - 2) *before* we came to faith in Christ
 - c. “made us alive together with Christ”
 - 1) when did He do that?
 - 2) *the moment* we put our faith in Christ!
 - d. V. 6 – “and **raised** *us* up together, and **made** *us* sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.
 - 1) what is the tense of the verbs here – past, present or future?
 - 2) they are in the *past* tense!
 - 3) right now, your *spiritual* position is that you are seated with Christ!
 - 4) your physical locale may be 1925 Eastman Ave., Oxnard, CA but your *spiritual* position is that you are seated on the throne of Jesus Christ in a position of favor, authority and power.
6. This is a truth, a reality that is so crucial and yet such a challenge to grasp, the Apostle Paul wrote this in the first chapter of Ephesians – (turn there)

¹⁵Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶do not cease to

give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²²And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him to *be* head over all *things* to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

7. Paul yearns for the Ephesians to understand who they are in Christ.
8. He aches for them to realize not just what they've been redeemed FROM, but what they've been redeemed FOR & TO!
9. Look again at Revelation 5:10 - “[You] **have made us kings and priests to our God.**”
 - a. this is past tense – we have been made kings.
 - b. as a blood-bought child of God, that’s who and what you are today – a King, a Queen.
 - c. remember the story of the Prodigal Son?
 - 1) the son thought he was returning home to offer himself as a servant -
 - 2) but the Father threw a royal robe over his shoulders and put a ring on his finger.
10. Friends, these aren’t just words; this is reality!
 - a. as a Christian – you are an *Arthur*
 - b. the world may not see it; your human family may not recognize it
 - c. the people you work and live and study next to might not see it
 - d. but you are royalty; a king or a queen whose great destiny is to

- rule!
11. Look at the last part of the verse – “**And we shall reign on the earth.**”
 - a. while we have already been made kings, the time of our rule is *yet future*.
 - b. it won't come till Jesus moves to take possession of what belongs to Him.
 - c. the day of our reign on Earth commences when Jesus comes again and reclaims His throne.
 - d. in Revelation 20 we learn that when He comes again, we will return with Him, and will become the agents of His rule over the Earth during the Millennium. [\[2\]](#)
 - e. in Rev. 2:26-27, Jesus said,
He who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’— as I also have received from My Father.
 12. Our glorious destiny is to reign with Christ during the Millennium.
 13. What we need to realize is that we aren't going to be thrown into the role cold!
 14. This life, this present time, the season of life that each of us are in right now, is all a part of our *preparation* to reign with Christ.
 - a. just as Arthur was groomed to lead virtuously by living a life of humble obscurity –
 - b. so you and I, *true* kings and queens, are learning how to *rule righteously* through the lessons we learn today.
 - c. our character is being shaped and molded by our experiences
 - d. the Word of God is renewing our minds
 - e. the Holy Spirit is conforming us to the image of Christ
 - f. we are being well taught about the devastating effect of sin and rebellion as we live in a fallen world.
 - g. we are growing increasingly disgusted with the perversion of justice and the overturning of honor that we see all around us.
 - h. how often have we joked with one another that if they just put *us* in charge of the world, we'd solve all the problems and set

- things right.
- i. of course, we mean it as a joke, but it's a joke that comes from a deep-seated sense that things are not right – and someone needs to *put* them right.
 - j. that day will come – and though we've *joked* about it, in fact *we will* be given a role to play in setting things right and then protecting it.
 - k. the Golden Age of Camelot is no mere legend – it will come!
 - l. and we will be the Knights of the Roundtable, taking our orders from our Heavenly King Arthur – Jesus Christ – the King of kings!
15. Do you realize what that phrase *really* means –
 - a. we are the kings - He is our Arch-King – the King, *of kings*
 - b. the One who gives us our position, authority, and power.
 16. But He wants us to wield that authority and power in a *virtuous* and *godly* way
 17. So that's why He has made us, not only kings, but *priests*.
 18. Look at v. 10 again – “**And have made us kings and priests to our God**”
 19. We don't need a formal priesthood in the Church because as the redeemed, we're all priests!
 - a. God made this abundantly clear when Jesus died on the Cross
 - b. the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom,
 - c. signifying that the way to God has been opened wide to all who will come by faith.
 - d. the need for a formal class of priests has been put aside by God.
 - e. now all can come on an equal basis – through Faith in Christ, who provided the Final and perfect sacrifice for sins.
 - 20 Faith in Him results in each of us becoming a priest; as the elders sing here – we *have been made* priests to our God.
 21. Our role as it relates to man is *king*, but our role as it relates to God is *priest*.
 - a. a priest's job is to *intercede* on behalf of others before God,
 - b. then to take God's Word and counsel *back* to those people so they can know the benefit and blessing of keeping His ways.
 22. Our role as kings will be *safeguarded and kept righteous* as long as it's balanced with our role as priests.
 23. Power will not corrupt us because as priests who stand before

God, we'll know where our power comes from.

III. CONCLUSION

A. A Royal Visit

1. One morning some time back not long after President Bush took office, I turned on the news and heard a report about how he and the First Lady had gone to church at one of the churches there in Washington DC.
2. It wasn't one of the churches Presidents usually go to, and it created quite a stir in the congregation.
3. I started thinking about what would happen if the President was visiting our area and he and Laura stopped by one Sunday for church.
4. What a scene it would turn in to!
 - a. the Secret Service, the press, the media groupies, and the curious
 - b. and what would our reaction be?
 - c. would we clamor, poke each other and say – “Look! The President's here!”
 - d. “I hope the worship is especially good today and that Pastor Lance speaks on Israel!”
 - e. let's be honest – there would probably be quite a lot of talk and excitement.
5. What would it be like in England if Queen Elizabeth decided to leave the Palace one Sunday and go visit some little Baptist church or Calvary Chapel of Westminster?
6. What if Prince Charles, the designated heir to the throne, the king in waiting and training, were to drop by for services one Sunday?
7. Folks, look around, every believer you see around you is a Queen in waiting or a King in training.
8. And while the position of President of the United States of America is a lofty and powerful position as far as earthly titles go, it's nothing compared to the glory that's to be revealed in us as the Children of God on our Coronation Day when Christ takes His throne.

B. A Glorious Destiny

1. Jesus not only redeemed us from sin and death – His redemption restores us to what was lost in the Fall – to have dominion – to rule with Him.
2. Right now, you and I are kings and queens.
3. This life is a time of royal training.
4. We are destined for the throne – and each day is one more lesson in how to rule well.
 - a. *husbands* – as the head of your home, you are learning how to exercise authority in a godly way; So, how are you doing?
 - b. *parents* – as you raise your children, you are learning how to lead in a way that brings glory to God; How’s it going?
 - c. in the daily use and management of your *finances*, you’re learning how to use handle valuable things; how faithful are you – can you be trusted with the riches of the Kingdom?
 - d. in the *people* you meet and interact with, you’re being trained to look for God’s purposes and advance His glory; so, how are you doing?
 - e. Do others give glory to God because of you, or do the blaspheme?
5. We thrill when we read some classic story like “The Man In the Iron Mask” or “The Prince & the Pauper.”
 - a. we love the timeless stories of those who are destined for greatness but who begin in obscurity.
 - b. we’re drawn to the story of Cinderella who humbly suffered at the hands of cruel relatives.
 - c. and while we listen and watch the story unfold, we cheer for the hero or heroine, urging them to hold on and not grow bitter, not to despair, because *we know* what they are enduring is the *very thing* that will allow them to rise to greatness.
6. We thrill to these stories and find them so inspiring because they speak to something deep in the heart of every one of us.
7. There is more to being a man or woman than 80 or 90 years of trudging around this planet.
8. God fashioned us for a glorious eternity of living and reigning with Him.
9. This life is preparation for that! **Today** is preparation for that!
10. And just as we cheer on the heroes and heroines of literature and movies, so we need to cheer one another on – because that’s

the real story.

11. What Paul prayed for the Ephesians, I pray for you and me – the God would open our eyes to who we really are in Christ – kings and priests, and remind us of our glorious destiny – we shall reign on the Earth.

[1] Johnson, Alan, The Expositor's Bible Commentary , pg. 470 See the Notes on v. 10 textual issues at the bottom of the page.

[2] Rev. 20:1-6