Journal Intro: Revelation 5:5 is no “cowardly Lion” like in Oz. This is the strong one – the great King of Heaven. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He is transcendent. He is Lord. In The Chronicles of Narnia (C.S. Lewis’ wonderful series of books) the Lion, Aslan, represents Jesus. As is said in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, when Lucy asks if he is a “safe lion,” Mrs. Beaver tells her, “of course he’s not safe, but he is good. He’s the King, I tell you!” Aslan tells Lucy in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader she will see him again, only on earth he is known by a different name. She must learn to know Aslan by that name (Jesus). He adds: “This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there.” Most readings this week are from the Old Testament and talk about the nature of a lion. The lion is not only strong, but is also worthy.

APPLICATION: Have you ever read the book or seen the movie “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe”? If so, discuss your favorite part. If not, consider watching it. Children love it, but it is the story of Jesus. 1 Peter 5:8-14 switches metaphors by describing our enemy as “a roaring lion,” instead of our savior. What does Peter say we should do to resist this lion? Finally, describe in your own words what “transcendent” means (you may have to search the word). Why is this such an important word?

Revelation 5:1-5

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" 3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. 4 I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. 5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

As we pray in The Lord’s Prayer: “Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done, On earth…..As It Is In Heaven.” We have spoken about “The Throne” in heaven (Jesus is on it) and of the Songs of heaven (“Holy, Holy, Lord, God Almighty, Who Was, Is + Is to Come.”) Today we talk about the Lion. Next week is about “The Lamb.”
the Lion of the tribe of Judah, What does this mean? Jacob (AKA “Israel”) had 12 sons. At the end of his life he prophesied what would happen to each of them. His first 3 sons had all their dirty laundry aired. When he comes to his 4th son, Judah, he doesn’t mentioned that it was Judah’s suggestion that the brothers sell Joseph as a slave. While Jacob mentioned Reuben’s sexual sin, he said nothing about the ugly story of Judah’s sexual sin with Tamar in Genesis 38. **Genesis 49:8-10:** “Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down to you. You are a lion’s cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness — who dares to rouse him? The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. Jacob obviously saw Judah’s potential. After Judah offered himself as a guarantee for Benjamin, Joseph probably bragged on Judah’s role to their dad. When Jacob and the family moved to Egypt, Jacob sent Judah ahead to make things ready (46:28). Judah had made some mistakes, but he had also recovered with his father and his family. That was the difference between him and his 3 older brothers. The name “Judah” and the Hebrew word for "praise" are very similar (29:35). Judah lived up to his name. He founded the royal tribe that gave Israel their kings, some of whom were godly leaders, and that ultimately brought Jesus Christ into the world. Hebrews 7:14 “For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah.” Since Judah was of the royal tribe, it was logical to associate the tribe with the lion, the king of the beasts. Jacob compared Judah to a lion's cub, a lion, and a lioness (Gen 49:9). Who would dare rouse a lion when he's resting after feeding on the kill, or a lioness while she's guarding her cubs? Verse 10 certainly goes beyond Judah's time and speaks of the blessings of the Kingdom Age when the Messiah shall reign over Israel. The 2nd metaphor: the Root of David. **Isaiah 11:1-3** A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him — the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord — and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. Jesse’s son of promise was King David. He was the greatest King of Israel. He united all of the tribes of Israel and created “The City of David,” Jerusalem. Like Jesus, he was from Bethlehem. Like Jesus, he was overlooked (he was the 8th and youngest son of Jesse). Like David, Jesus was “the good shepherd.” People also called Jesus “the son of David” (6x in Matthew’s Gospel). Jesus was a Jew ho was from the tribe of Judah whose tribe had the symbol of a Lion.
Then I saw in the right hand (authority/power) of him who sat on the throne a scroll. The scroll = scripture, like the 10 Commandment tablets because writing was on both sides (Ex. 32:15). Both Isaiah and Daniel talk about sealing up words of prophecy which might explain why the seals are related to the judgments (beginning in chapter 6). This could be the revealing of those prophecies.

with writing on both sides. John knew the Hebrew traditions = a scroll represented the title deed to property. 2,000 years ago a Jew would’ve tried to keep the property within the family from generation to generation. If a family had to sell the property, on one side of the scroll would be details of the deed would be on one side. On the other side would be a condition for a kinsman-redeemer qualification so that someone in your family could come back and buy it.

and sealed with seven seals. Had we lived in the 1st century we would have known why a scroll had 7 seals? John understood the Roman Empire tradition how a final will and testament needed 7 people to execute it: The heir, the executor and 5 witnesses to hear him dictate his will to a secretary. When finished, the document was rolled up. Each person attested that it was correct and made if official by tying a string around it and then put wax on his knot and pressing his seal into the wax. Thus, there were 7 seals in the will.

And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. The concern wasn’t at this point, “what’s on the scroll, “but who can open it.“ All heaven must know what’s in it. But the will is sealed and “no one in heaven or earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it” (vs 3). No human being or angel could break the seals. The 4 Living Creatures (chapter 4) or the 24 Elders could not, either.

I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Since one can open the scroll, John weeps (convulsively) – will creation continue in this problem forever? There’s a lot of weeping in the Bible Esau when his treacherous brother stole his blessing; Joseph when he was reunited with his brothers; Naomi after she had lost her husband and 2 sons; Hannah wept because she was barren; King David wept a lot; Job may have been the all-time weeper. That guy had so many problems on so many different levels.

Psalms 137:1 By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. The Exile was a complete and total disaster for the Jewish people. Ezra & Nehemiah wept when they learned of what had happened to their country and to Jerusalem. There’s weeping in the New Testament, too. Peter wept. Matt 26:75
"Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. 

**Jesus wept** is the shortest verse in the Bible when He wept when his friend Lazarus died. He also wept over Jerusalem as He knew what would happen to it in less than 40 years. There are a LOT of things in life that make US weep. Maybe what you read/hear in the news today makes you weep. I’ve spoken to people who’ve lost jobs and who got wiped out in the stock market. As a pastor I’ve been with you as some of you wept over a marriage that ended, addictions of all kinds, children who were having problems, and of course, at a time of death. I remember weeping at my father’s death at Hillcrest and my sister’s death when both were 56.

v5 **"Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."** Jesus is the only One who is worthy to open the scroll. Jesus is the triumphant One who has defeated death. He has overcome the world (John 16:33). It’s all about the resurrection. It’s all about heaven. It’s all about Jesus. None of us are worthy to open the scroll. We can’t do it. We need the strong and courageous Lion to open it for us. We can’t save ourselves. But our good news is that someone can. His name is Jesus. If we side with Him and surrender our lives to Him, we gain access to heavenly things. He is our password that opens us a whole new world and identity for us. For it to be on earth as it is in heaven, we recognize we worship a courageous King who died a sacrificial death like a lamb but will return in power and for judgment. We must move away from the “bathrobe” Jesus; the soft, always gentle and overly kind, never asking too much of anyone. It helps to think of Him as a majestic and powerful Lion. This gives us a healthy fear/respect of the Lord and to respond to Him with obedience and worship, in humility and with repentance. But, also remember that in Him and by the help of His Holy Spirit and His word we are also triumphant.

If you’ve been doing a lot of **weeping**, you’re in good company and you’re also in the right place. We don’t tell you not to weep but we insist our tears will be transformed.

We must remember “the rest of the story.” I remember hearing a story about a little boy who was reading a book and he got so scared by it – it seems the bad guys would prevail – that he went to the very end of the book and read the last page – and learned that the good guy won. He was then able to go back to the story and re-read it, only this time, with confidence that though there would be problems, in the end, there would be victory and not loss.
After Jesus was crucified, **Mary** stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. The resurrection changed her weeping into unrestrained joy. The END of the story is in **Rev 21:1-4**: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ”Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

The reason we can do this = there’s a LION who is loose. And his name is Jesus. He doesn’t come to steal, kill, destroy or devour – He comes to give us life and life eternal. Have you received the Lion’s gift into your life? As you receive communion today give yourself to Him.