

# Worthy is the Lamb

Revelation 5

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## Revelation 5:1-4 – Who is worthy to open the scroll?

*And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. <sup>2</sup> Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” <sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>4</sup> So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.*

### v1 – Who is Him who sat on the throne?

God the Father

### What do the symbols of the scroll represent?

- Scroll in right hand: it's the authority of God
- Sealed scroll: details sealed by God
- Seven seals: completeness of the seals

### What does it tell us that the scroll was written inside and on the back?

It wasn't common practice to write on both sides of the scroll. This means that there was a lot of information on this scroll, almost more than it could contain.

### What do you think was written on this scroll?

This is not clear with perhaps the best guess being that it is the title deed to the earth which may be supported by Jeremiah 32:6-15. Though this begs the question, when did God ever lose the title deed to earth?

- According to the Law and customs of the ancient Jewish people, the sign of a “forfeited inheritance” was a “sealed scroll”. If a person had to give up their inheritance of the land allocated to them, a scroll was written recounting the reason for the forfeiture and giving the terms of redemption of the inheritance.

The best solution is to see the scroll as God's will, his final settlement of the affairs of the universe.

- Customarily, under Roman law, wills were sealed with seven seals, each from a witness to the validity of the will.

The idea here is that God has a book in which the history of the universe is already written.

- He has *written* the history of the world in advance, and He *initiates* the consummation of all history.

- *Only God can hold this scroll.*

### v2-3 – Who questioned the opening of the scroll?

A strong angel – one who is close to God.

### Who is worthy to break the seals to open the scroll?

No one in heaven (angels & dead in Christ), on earth (mortal people), or under the earth (dead without Christ); Only God

### v4 – Why did John weep?

- There was no one was found worthy to open, read or even look at the scroll.
- Because it looked like a previous promise to see the future may now be denied (Revelation 4:1)
- Or, more likely, because the consummation of history would now be indefinitely postponed.

### Rev 5:5-7 – The Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy

<sup>5</sup> *But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”*

<sup>6</sup> *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. <sup>7</sup> Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*

### v5 – Who is worthy to open the scroll and loose the seven seals?

*The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David*  
Jesus, the Messiah is worthy.

- The Messianic title *Lion of the tribe of Judah* comes from Genesis 49:9-10, Isaiah 31:4, and Hosea 11:10. The title *Root of David* comes from Isaiah 11:10 and is repeated in Revelation 22:16.

### Why is it significant that it was one of the elders who made this declaration?

The church knows of the worthiness of Jesus because it was his sacrifice on the cross on our behalf that redeems us.

### **v6-7 – What does John’s vision of the Lamb tell us about our Lord?**

- Midst of throne: He is God
- Midst of elders: He is the head of Israel & the Church
- Lamb as though had been slain: He is Jesus who died for us: it still applies thousands of years later
- Seven horns: complete authority (omnipotence)
- Seven eyes: complete omniscience
- Seven Spirits: Holy Spirit involvement

### **What is the significance of the Lamb taking the scroll?**

No created being was found worthy to take the scroll, but the Lamb can take it.

- His rank, character and ability to take the scroll and open it (and thus dictate the destiny of creation) has been demonstrated by His work on the cross.

### **Rev 5:8-10 – The song of the elders & the cherubim**

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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,” <sup>10</sup> And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”*

### **So, given the action of the 24 elders, what do you think the scroll might be?**

- **What was the forfeited inheritance?**  
Lost fellowship with God
- **What was the reason for the forfeited inheritance?**  
Sin
- **What was the requirement for redemption?**  
Blood sacrifice.

### **How is Jesus our qualified redeemer?**

1 Peter 1:18 - *“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect”.*

To redeem the lost inheritance, forfeited by man, the redeemer must be a kinsman and must come forward with the purchase price in hand (Lev 25:25)

- Jesus had willingly come and He paid the price!

### **What is with the harps that each of the elders had?**

- This is symbolic of their exercising creativity in their praise of God.
- It is reminiscent of David, a man after God’s own heart, pleasing God in song (Ps 57:8)

### **Why are the prayers of the saints represented by incense in golden bowls?**

- Gold because our prayers are precious to God.
- Incense because our prayers rise to heaven & are pleasing to God... God is pleased when we pray.

### **v9-10 – What was this new song that will be sang?**

They sang a new song of praise to worship and glorify Jesus recalling why He is worthy to redeem us: He paid the price by shedding His own blood in our place.

### **Who sang the new song?**

The elders representing Israel & the church who were redeemed.

### **What is the significance of this song being “new”?**

There will be a lot of new things in heaven ...it will not be boring. Also, it is a new thing...

- that the Son of God should become man.
- to ascend into the heavens with a body.
- to give remission of sins to men.
- for men to be sealed with the Holy Spirit.
- to receive the priesthood of sacred observance
- to look for a kingdom of unbounded promise.

### **What does it mean that we have been redeemed to God?**

Jesus made it possible for us to be with Him

### **Who has been redeemed to God?**

Every tribe, tongue, people, nation: representatives from all races, family-lines, languages, people-groups

### **How is it that the redeemed have been made kings and priests?**

- Made us kings: we will have authority to act in God’s place as a reward for our faithfulness and service
- Made us priests: we get to represent God to others (& others to God) ...no mediator required!

### **What does it mean we will reign on the earth?**

We will have a role in the Millennial Kingdom which foreshadows the Eternal State where we will live and get to participate in what God will be doing in eternity.

### **Rev 5:11-14 – All creation praises the Father & Lamb**

<sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup> saying with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
To receive power and riches and wisdom,  
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

<sup>13</sup> And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power  
Be to Him who sits on the throne,  
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

<sup>14</sup> Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped Him who lives forever and ever.

### **v11-12 – Who joins the elders in their heavenly praise to God?**

*many angels around the throne & the living creatures*

The angels join in with redeemed Israel & the church

- In Rev 4:9-10, the angels prompted the elders into worship. Here, the elders seem to prompt the angels.
- It is a wonderful cycle with the angels and elders encouraging each other to more and more praise.

### **How many angels and redeemed people will be praising God in heaven?**

- 10,000 x 10,000 = 100M (One Hundred Million)
- Probably symbolic of too many to count

### **What is worthy for the Lamb to receive?**

- *power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing*
- 7 points of praise ...complete praise!

### **v13 – Who now joins the angelic host in their praise of God?**

*every creature...*

*in heaven – angels & redeemed people*

*on the earth – animals & mortal people*

*under the earth – unredeemed dead people*

*in the sea – animals & mortal submariners*

### **To whom is due, *Blessing and honor and glory and power?***

*to Him who sits on the throne – God the Father*

*And to the Lamb – God the Son*

### **How is this worship of the Lamb strong testimony to the deity of Jesus?**

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Lamb is to be reckoned as God.

- If Jesus Christ were not properly God this would be idolatry, as it would be giving to the creature what belongs to the Creator.

### **v14 – What commentary do the four living creatures make to this praise to God?**

Amen – so be it; they agree and affirm what was sang

### **What did the elders do?**

Fell down and worshipped God

- The ancient Greek word for **worshipped** is literally “to prostrate.”
- This is the eastern method of *adoration*: first, the person worshipping fell down on his knees; and then, bowing down touched the earth with his forehead. This latter act was *prostration*.

### **What is significant about worshipping *forever and ever*?**

The living God reigns eternally. The Caesars come and go, including those who persecute God’s people.

- But the Lord God **lives forever and ever** and is *ever* worthy of our praise.

### **What applications should we take from John’s vision of the Lamb taking the scroll?**

- Jesus is our unique kinsman-redeemer
- Since the redeemed are kings and priests we need to act like it... start representing God
- God’s promises for our glorious future with Him are a blessing
- All will eventually praise God; it is good to be an early adopter of giving Him praise