

From the Rapture to the Second Coming

Revelation 5: “Worthy Lamb & 7 Sealed Scroll”



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Let's Get Started

Revelation is a book of symbols. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John recorded God's message using these symbols to make it easier for us to understand. Unfortunately, now we have the task of deciphering what is the meaning of these symbols. To do that we look to the Old Testament book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 32 explains the law for redemption of land (Leviticus 25:8-24; Jeremiah 32:1-25). Its purpose was to help those in Israel who fell behind in their debts. Those who got behind lost their land but were not without hope. They still had the right to buy their land back in the future. Even if they did not, or could not buy their land, after a prescribed period of time their heir or next of kin could buy it. In this way, their land remained in their family.

On one occasion, God told Jeremiah that his cousin would ask him to redeem his land. His cousin had fallen in debt, lost his land, and been sentenced to prison. It wasn't long before Jeremiah went to see his cousin in prison. There the cousin asked Jeremiah to buy his land and told him it is his right to redeem it and possess it (Jeremiah 32:8). Understanding that it was God's law, Jeremiah bought the land.

Even this wasn't enough. Jeremiah had not yet met all of the requirements of the law. When his cousin lost the land, two scrolls (contracts) containing terms for redeeming the land were drafted. One scroll became a public record and was displayed unsealed for all to read. The other was rolled up and sealed with seven seals and placed in storage at the temple. It was brought out only when someone showed proof of their right to redeem the land.

After this redeemer presented the necessary proof of ownership, the temple priest would retrieve the seven-sealed scroll from storage. He would then unseal the scroll and read it. If everything was in order, the redeemer would receive all ownership to the land.

When God created all things, he gave earth to man, but Adam sinned and lost it to Satan. However, Adam is still a joint heir with Jesus, an adopted child of God. He is a **Kinsman Redeemer** (Isaiah 63:16), one who can buy back the earth and mankind.

In Chapter 5 the Church is now in heaven, and we are in that period of time between the Rapture and the Tribulation Period. The question before us is, **who qualifies to redeem Adam's lost property** (Romans 3:23, 24; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 2:2)?

What Others are Saying:

Hal Lindsey: Sealing a scroll was a common and important practice in Biblical times. The wills of both Emperor Vespasian and Caesar Augustus, for example, were secured with seven seals. For such a document, a scribe would procure a long roll of parchment and begin writing. After a period of writing he would stop, roll the parchment enough to cover his words, and seal the scroll at that point with wax. Then he would resume writing, stop again, roll the scroll, and add another seal. By the time he was finished, he would have sealed the scroll seven times. The scroll would be read a section at a time, after each seal was opened. ⁵¹

Safely Out

Revelation 5:1, 2 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. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"

John is still in heaven and beside God's throne at the opening of Chapter 5. He sees a scroll in God's right hand that is sealed seven times with writing on both sides. Whatever this scroll is, there is no doubt that it is important. Why would God reveal this scroll to his Church? Could it be that he has the destiny of all mankind in his hands? Could it be that he is in charge of all that happens on earth? We know that God did not allow the earth to be destroyed by the flood (Genesis 6 and 7) until Noah and his family were safely in the ark. We also know that God would not allow Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16; 19:29) to be destroyed by fire and brimstone until Lot and his family were safely out of the city. Could it be that God will not allow this scroll to be opened until his church is safely in heaven?

John also saw a powerful angel. What made this angel appear to be so strong is not revealed, but he had the authority to speak in the presence of God. We do not know who

this angel is, but because the name Gabriel (Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19) means *strength of God*, some believe he is indeed the archangel Gabriel. *Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?* is a gripping question. Who could ever qualify as a redeemer for Adam and our fallen world?

The Root of David

Revelation 5:3–5 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. 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."

No one in heaven or earth, either living or dead, will be able to open the scroll and look inside. Obviously John was heartbroken because he desired to know what the scroll contained. He had a great love for all mankind and had hoped the scroll would provide the answers to its problems, but that was not to be. The message of the scroll would have to wait.

Suddenly, one of the twenty-four elders told John to stop crying. Someone worthy to open the scroll had been found. It is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. These two Old Testament names of God remind us of the first and second coming of Jesus.

Judah (Genesis 35:23-26), one of the twelve sons of **Israel** (also called **Jacob**, Genesis 32:28), was also the first leader of one of the twelve tribes of **Israel** (Genesis 49:28). God promised the **Messiah** (Genesis 49:9, 10; 2 Samuel 7) would come from that tribe whose symbol was a lion. Jesus, a descendant of the tribe of Judah, is the Messiah, the **Lion of the tribe of Judah** (Genesis 49:9). At the end of the Tribulation Period Jesus will return with the strength of a lion.

Jesus is also the **Root of David** (Isaiah 11:1; Revelation 22:16). God promised David that one of his descendants would be the Messiah. Jesus is a fulfillment of that prophecy. His earthly mother was Mary, a descendant of David. Jesus came as a lamb the first time.

What Others are Saying:

Wim Malgo: Why was it necessary for one of the elders to comfort John, who already knew that Jesus had overcome? Because John did that which we so easily do. He lost sight of the victory of the Lamb and this always results in hopelessness and tears. How very often do we insult the Lord with our weeping and discouragement. We are often ready to resign in spite of the fact that he has achieved the great and wonderful victory. [5:2](#)

Something to Ponder

When we get to heaven, it will not be because we are righteous (Romans 3:10, 23) or because we are worthy redeemers, but because we have been redeemed by the grace of God.

Sacrifice The Lamb

Revelation 5:6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

When Jesus walked upon this earth, John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-17) introduced him by saying, *Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world* (John 1:29). When the John of Revelation saw him in heaven, he described Jesus as *a Lamb, looking as it had been slain*. Jesus is our sacrificial lamb. The Old Testament prophet Isaiah foretold that he would be as a lamb led to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7).

Jesus looked like he had been killed, but he was not lying on an altar, in bed, or in a casket. He was standing in the center of the throne, surrounded by the four living creatures and twenty-four elders.

Seven is the number of perfection in the Bible, and horns are symbols of power. Seven horns means that Jesus had omnipotent, perfect power. He may have looked like a little lamb, but he had all the power of God. After being raised from the dead, Jesus said, *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me* (Matthew 28:18).

The seven eyes are defined as the seven spirits of God sent out to all the earth. He looked like he had been slain, but his eyes were not closed. He had the all-seeing omniscient vision of the Holy Spirit. He sees and knows all.

Key Symbols:

Seven Horns

omnipotent

Seven Eyes

omniscient (seven spirits of God)

Something to Ponder

The seven virtues of the Holy Spirit are, the nature of Jesus, wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and respect for God's will. Jesus also possessed these same virtues, and the Holy Spirit continually spreads them over all the earth. Not everyone is willing to receive them, but they still are everywhere.

From Lamb To Lion

Revelation 5:7, 8 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Keep in mind that John was seeing those things that will take place after the Church is raptured. The Rapture is a very significant event because it marks a distinct change in the

way Jesus deals with mankind. Up until now he has dealt with us as a lamb, but from this point on through the Tribulation Period, he will deal with those who are left behind as a lion.

John watched as Jesus took the scroll from the right hand of God. All of creation has waited almost six thousand years for this pivotal moment. Adam lost the title deed to earth for all mankind, but Jesus has proven himself a worthy redeemer and will get the deed back.

When Jesus took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped him each with a harp and a golden bowl. The harps are musical instruments that will accompany the singing in heaven. The golden bowls will contain the prayers of the saints. Who and what will we be praying for? We will be praying for our loved ones on earth who are being persecuted. We will pray for the defeat of the Satanic trinity, and we will pray for the Second Coming and subsequent reign of Jesus.

Key Symbols:

Harps

musical instruments

Bowls

the prayers of the saints

Something to Ponder

The Godhead is thought of as trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Satan seems to try to duplicate that with his own trinity called the Satanic trinity. Satan tries to replace God, the Antichrist tries to replace Christ, and the False Prophet tries to replace the Holy Spirit. Satan will indwell the Antichrist and False Prophet, so they will be pure evil. When the Antichrist supposedly dies and is resurrected some think he will come back to life because Satan has possessed his body.

A New Song

Revelation 5:9, 10 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders sang a new song with a new form of praise. Their song speaks of what Jesus is to do, and what he has already done. It tells why Jesus is worthy to take the scroll and open the seals.

Jesus is worthy because he was slain on the cross at Calvary. The Old Testament prophet Isaiah said, *Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his*

own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 4:6).

Jesus is worthy because with his blood he purchased our sins. He paid the price of our redemption. *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* (1 Peter 1:18, 19). The blood of Jesus was precious. God said, *For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar* (Leviticus 17:11) It was the blood of Jesus that makes atonement for our sins.

Jesus is worthy because he is **no respecter of persons** (Acts 10:34). He died for the sins of all the world, *every tribe and language and people and nation*, because he loves the world (John 3:16).

Jesus is worthy because he made us a royal priesthood to serve and reign with him. He commissioned his Church to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). And when he returns in his Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation Period, we will reign with him (Revelation 20:6) on earth for a one thousand years (the Millennium).

What Others are Saying:

J. Vernon McGee: The "new song" is the song of redemption. The "old song" is the song of creation. (The Old Testament praises God for his creation, but the New Testament praises God for his love). ⁵⁻³

Remember This...

Iniquity is a type of sin. It is a sin of commission such as theft or murder. **Sin** is wrongdoing of any kind. It can be an act of omission (not doing something) or of commission (doing something).

Worthy Is The Lamb

Revelation 5:11, 12 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand (Daniel 7:10). They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise."

John looked and he saw a multitude of angels gathered around the living creatures, the twenty-four elders, and the throne of God. Then he heard them singing declaring the worthiness of God. Who is to receive:

- ✓ **Power**—the authority to do whatever he wants (forgive sins, give eternal life, and command angels)
- ✓ **Wealth**—the riches of God (everything belongs to him)
- ✓ **Wisdom**—the natural wisdom of God (his counsel, his understanding, and the ability to create, uphold, govern, judge, and redeem)
- ✓ **Strength**—the physical strength to do whatever he wants (perform miracles, conquer,

- create, destroy, cast into the lake of fire)
- ✓ *Honor*—rewards (the rewards of God and his people)
- ✓ *Glory*—the image of God (God's glory, God's magnificence, God's splendor, the royal dignity and the royal majesty)
- ✓ *Praise*—worship, acknowledgment and commendation

What Others are Saying:

Tim LaHaye: In a day when humanistic men are unwilling to acknowledge Jesus Christ as more than a "good man" or a "model example," we should hear what the angels of heaven, who know him best, say of him. They proclaim him worthy to receive seven things, power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing, which far out shadows any obeisance due to mortal men. I joyfully accept the description of the angels as the only authentic portrait of Christ. ⁵⁴

Every Creature

Revelation 5:13, 14 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshipped.

John heard every creature praise God and his son Jesus. Every creature in heaven, under the earth, and on the sea. Every creature that is alive or dead. Every creature who has been judged, and or will be judged. *Every creature* from the days of Adam to the Rapture will praise him.

The four living creatures responded to the praise by saying, *Amen*, signifying that they were in agreement with the praise of every other creature. They affirmed their praise and worship. Then the twenty-four elders responded by falling down and worshipping the **Father and the Son** (Philippians 2:9-11). Praise and worship is due the Father and the Son throughout all eternity. Both were involved in the redemption of all things and both should be praised as long as anything exists.

What Others are Saying:

David Hocking: Can there be any doubt as to the grand and ultimate objective for the believer? Is not the worship and praise of Almighty God our primary goal? We will one day participate in that heavenly scene, but even now we can enjoy the privilege of exalting Him. As Paul exhorts us, whatever we do, let us do it to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). ⁵⁵

Study Questions

- ✓ What is the implied significance of the scroll?
- ✓ How are the two comings of Jesus symbolized in John's vision?
- ✓ How does this chapter explain the seeming injustice of God letting sin go unpunished?
- ✓ Why is the Church a royal priesthood?
- ✓ How do we know that Jesus was more than just a good man, or a prophet

[Go to Answers](#)

Chapter Wrap-up

- ✓ God will hold a seven sealed scroll in his right hand as an angel asks, who is worthy to open the scroll? John will cry when no one steps forward. ([Revelation 5:1–4](#))
 - ✓ Jesus is the Lion of Judah, and he is the only one worthy to open the scroll. He is worthy because he was slain for the sins of the world. ([Revelation 5:5–7](#))
 - ✓ Once Jesus takes the scroll, the four living creatures and twenty-four elders will sing a new song; the angels will also join in proclaiming Christ's worthiness. ([Revelation 5:8–12](#))
 - ✓ When heaven is singing to Jesus, all creatures on earth and under the sea will also sing praise to him. ([Revelation 5:13](#))
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