



The Lamb Unveiled

There is only One who is worthy of all worship, for He was worthy to bring hope, salvation, and judgement to the world.

Revelation 5:1-14

BIBLE PASSAGE

Rev 5:1-14 NKJV - 1 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. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 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." 6 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. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 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. 9 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, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." 11 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, 12 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!" 13 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!" 14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

INTRO

As you remember from last week, John was transported into heaven instantly. He hears a voice as of a trumpet saying, "Come up here," and he is raptured, transported into the third heaven. When He gets there, he is awestruck as he peers into God's throne room. He sees the throne and the One who sits on the throne. The colors and sounds are too much for his senses to handle.

He sees 24 lesser thrones and 24 elders that sat upon these thrones. Then, all of a sudden, heaven erupts into worship, declaring, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty!" And every time the living creatures would say this, the 24 elders would cast their crowns before the throne and resound, "Thou art worthy, oh Lord to receive glory, honor, and power!"

Now we come to chapter 5, and it's important to realize that chapters 4 and 5 are one flowing event. There are no chapter breaks in the original. We are still in heaven, still in the throne room of God. After John hears this worship, the center of attention shifts from the throne to a scroll and from the scroll to the Lamb.

As we dive in, I want you to jot down three points we will look at today in Chapter 5:

CUSTOM

The Dilemma

The Deliverer

The Doxology

A Scroll

A Savior

A Song

1 The Dilemma

BIBLE PASSAGE

Rev 5:1-4 NKJV - 1 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. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

THE SCROLL

There's debate as to what this scroll is. We know it contains unfolding world events relating to God's judgment and wrath upon the earth.

THE SCROLL'S CHARACTERISTICS:

- This wasn't a scroll that looked like a book. An ancient scroll was a large piece of papyrus that was rolled and folded. When you would open a scroll, you would roll it out progressively.
 - In Jeremiah 32, we find another sealed scroll. It was a title deed to land that Jeremiah purchased. According to the custom, the terms of the deed would be written and sealed with a wax seal so as not to be broken. **The more terms there were, the more seals. In order to fulfill the terms, you couldn't break a seal until the previous section had been read and the terms met.**

MEDIA



Scroll

APPLICATION

- Perhaps this is a reference to what the future of the earth's ownership looks like:
 - The title deed to the earth is continually unfolding, but before the next steps can be implemented, the seals must be broken. God sealed the deed, and only God can break the seals. Interestingly, when land switched hands, the title deed had to be opened and its seals broken to discover what terms had to take place for the transaction to be complete.

SATAN: We know that for a short time, Satan is the influencer and ruler of the world; he is not the king, but he has some latitude with the deed for a time. But in heaven, as God's redeemed are now with Christ, and the time has come for all things to come under the authority of Christ, we see the final transactions and transfers being made in heaven. The rightful owner will now break the seals and unfold the rest of the scroll so that the master plan for the property will come to completion.

The dominion of Satan suffered a debilitating blow on the cross. Through the resurrection, Jesus ascended to the highest place, and we are told that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to him. So why does Satan still have ruling power? Why is he called the god of this world and the prince of the powers of the air? One word: SIN.

- When humans choose to reject the authority that Jesus has, they choose the path of satan. When people choose to be ruled by sin, that sin gives the devil a hold of authority. Why does Jesus allow it? The only way to stop it is to destroy sin and those who choose it, taking all grip that Satan has away. He hasn't done that yet because He is patient, and he desires that none should perish but that all should come to repentance.

But Satan's already short leash will one day turn in to chains by which he will be bound, but Jesus has to take that deed and complete the final steps contained within it to utterly destroy the power of Satan.

THE DILEMMA

2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

ILLUSTRATION

When I was a kid, I watched that old Disney Movie, "**The Sword in the Stone.**" No, it's definitely not a Christian-themed story and has sorcery and magic and all the rest, but the plot is interesting. The Sword in the Stone is a novel by T.H. White that tells the story of the early years of King Arthur. Set in medieval England, the book follows the adventures of a

young boy named Wart who is fostered by the kindly Sir Ector. Through his interactions with Merlin, a wise and powerful wizard, Wart learns about chivalry, leadership, and medieval warfare. One day, while staying with Sir Ector, Wart sees a sword set in a stone. He walks up to it and pulls the sword from a stone. Little did he know that no one else had ever been able to perform this feat. It had been earlier prophesied that this task could only be accomplished by the true king of England. This event sets in motion a chain of events that leads to Wart's eventual coronation as King Arthur.

I remember watching the movie when I was a kid and wondering, "will anyone be able to get the sword out?" And you were a little sad because you realized if no one ever got the sword, then there would not be a king, and all the problems would just stay the same.

APPLICATION

When the angel asks the question of who can open the scroll and lose the seals, everyone watching, including John, knows what's at stake.

- The search begins. Heavenly beings, earthly beings, and the best that humanity has to offer are gauged to see if any had the requirements to complete the task at hand. The end result? No one and nothing was found worthy. Hey, if mighty angels are out fo the running, you really think the best humanity has to offer is going to qualify?

JOKE: It reminds me of the newlyweds who went shopping for their first house. They didn't have much money. They told the realtor their salary, then they asked, "Do you think you have a house in our price range?" The agent answered, "Yes, its current owner is a German Shepherd named "Prince."

John weeps: He's not weeping because he wants to see the end of the movie, and he doesn't get to see the final scene. John is weeping because he knows what's on the line.

- If no one opens the seal and takes full ownership of this deed to the universe, it's business as usual. Sin will still have dominion; the enemy will still wreak havoc. Unrighteousness, sickness, pain, and death will continue their reign of terror, there will be no final restoration of all things that had been contaminated by sin.

Can I suggest that those of us who have tasted and seen the goodness of God understand to a small degree what John was going through?

- How many times have we looked at the world around us, its injustices, its deceit, its unfulfilled promises, its pain, and we have broken hearts?

- The word "weep" means "convulse in deep sorrow." Have you been there? It's the weeping of desperation. It's the weeping over the unexpected death of your loved one when you realize that nothing will bring them back. It's the weeping over the deep depression and anxiety that no one and nothing can seem to repair.
- **EXAMPLE:** My son weeping over his broken arm. "I wish I could my life had a rewind button!" I wonder if you've ever wept because your life doesn't have a rewind button?
- I would suggest that the one thing that keeps humanity running is this innate desire to be fixed, or should I say, to fix itself. But none of our solutions work because we are also the source of the problem.
- What if someone who was outside the source of our problem could repair it for us? What if someone who hasn't contributed to the problem could be found to bring the ultimate restoration?

JEREMIAH - The weeping prophet. Lamentations records the weeping and laments of the prophet as he observes the devastation and destruction brought upon Jerusalem by the Babylonians. In the midst of his weeping comes one of the most beautiful verses and promises:

Lamentations 3:21-24 - 21 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. 22 Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

Well, as John is weeping, he hears another voice:

2 The Deliverer

BIBLE PASSAGE

Rev 5:5-7 NKJV - 5 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."

QUOTE

“ Do not weep - "Tears may flow in the face of hopelessness, but faith sees beyond the pain to a capable Savior who can turn our brokenness into beauty."

Josh Blevins

APPLICATION

In the earliest days of Israel's formation, God put forth real estate laws. Little did anyone know that these were actually to foreshadow an event in heaven at the end of time. In ancient Israel, there was a role known as the **"Goel," or sibling/kinsman redeemer**. If a family had land, but the main landowner died, or they fell into financial despair and had to sell their land, the closes kin had a legal opportunity and responsibility to purchase the land in order to keep it in the family and keep the family's legacy and financial state secure. In addition, the Goel also had the responsibility of bringing in the family as his own. This is what Boaz did for Ruth. So the kinsman redeemer, with his own resources, purchased back the land and the people to secure them from a tragedy or fallout.

- John, along with the angel, is scanning heaven, hoping to find a rich relative of God who has what it takes to purchase back the universe, the earth, and people from the grips of mankind's sin. Man sinned, and as a result, the deed was hijacked.
- Just when John thought that no one would be able to perform this role, one of the elders spoke up!

LION AND A ROOT

In the description of the One who is worthy, we see the Old Testament image of the Messiah. We clearly know Whom this is talking about. It's Jesus.

- 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**.

He is the Lion because the Messiah would rule His kingdom in splendor and authority. He would rule with a rod of iron, devouring any who reject His reign. The lion is mighty and fierce, and comes from the line of Judah, fulfilling God's prophetic promise to Judah.

- In Genesis 49:10, Jacob (also known as Israel) is blessing his twelve sons before he dies. When he comes to Judah, he says: *"The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his."*

He is the root of David because He is kingly and majestic and from David's line.

- Isaiah 11:1 prophecies that Jesus will be the branch that stems out of David. This means that physically, he would come from the royal line to which God promised there would be a descendant upon the throne of Israel forever. As a descendant of David, Jesus shares in the human lineage and history of the Jewish people. But as the Root, He is also seen as the source of David's greatness, the one from whom David's power and authority ultimately derive. Jesus is the branch and, at the same time, the root. He is man and God. He is the offspring and the source.

As John turns to look, he is expecting a lion, a royal lion with a crown and a roar. Instead, he sees a very different picture.

BIBLE PASSAGE

6 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. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

APPLICATION

John, expecting to see the majestic and powerful King of Kings, instead sees a lamb bearing the marks of slaughter.

When we think of Lions and lambs, the contrast is quite evident. They are completely opposite ends of the food chain and power structure of the animal kingdom:

Lions and majesty and powerful, but lambs are weak and frail. Lions overcome, lambs submit. Lions kill, and lambs die.

And this lamb, bearing the marks of the slaughter, is none other than the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We find Jesus, who has overcome as a lion by submitting like a lamb, who will rule forever as a lion through accepting the sacrificial death of a lamb.

BEEN SLAIN (image):

- It's been said that the only man-made thing in heaven is the remaining scars on Jesus. He can never be forgotten, for the reality of his death is written upon him even in eternity. I don't know exactly how much of this language is figurative or literal, but I believe that when we are in heaven, we will forever remember how Jesus was slain from the foundation of the world so that we may have life.

This is where Jesus shatters the perception of how we viewed Him on earth. He was beaten because He made Himself vulnerable. He let cruel men take, torture, and crucify Him. The Lion willingly became a lamb. **Isa 53:7 NKJV - 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.** Yet today, you can hear the Lamb roar! 17 Jesus is no longer vulnerable - He's overcome. He's won the victory! He's a Lamb, but He's a roaring Lamb. Jesus is a Lamb who forevermore acts like a lion.

The slain lamb approached the throne of God with His own blood, and it became the mercy seat. Through His sacrifice, we can find mercy, grace, or forgiveness of sin. But that mercy seat will also be the judgment seat when the lamb gets ready to roar and break the seals that send forth God's righteous judgment to the unbelieving world. Are you alive and breathing now? You still have the opportunity to experience the lamb's mercy before you have to stand before His wrath.

And don't get thrown off by the seven horns and eyes. Let's not forget the lesson we learned in chapter 1. Seven is the number of God's perfect work, his completion, and the totality of his authority.

- **The seven horns represent the totality of all authority that is now him. They are a sign of power.**
- **The seven eyes represent the fullness of God's Spirit that is within and upon Jesus and that He and the Spirit are one and see all.**
- **In fact, in this scene, we see the continued work of the triune God in the final events of human history. The Spirit is upon Christ, and Christ is receiving from the Father.**

John knew Jesus in life, but was he prepared for Jesus as he would see him in heaven? John stood at the foot of Jesus' cross. He saw the wounds, the blood, the suffering. But this time, John sees the other end of the cross, what the suffering would accomplish, that Christ's death was necessary for Christ to ultimately redeem and reign.

LOOKING AHEAD

I don't want to get too far ahead of myself, but these seals that the lamb breaks don't unleash peace on earth and goodwill toward men.

- Four angelic cowboys bring forth brutal war, pestilences, violence, inflation, and economic woes the likes we could not imagine, 1/4 of the earth's population is decimated, there are celestial disturbances that culminate in the second coming of the lamb in His might.
- But today, we don't have to drink from the cup of God's wine of wrath; we rather drink from the cup that reminds us that Jesus sealed a new and lasting covenant with us with his own blood. Instead of ating of the bread of wrath and adversity, we eat of the bread that reminds us that Jesus' body was broken so that we could be healed and be made one body in Him.