

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 1ST, 2024 // REVELATION

WHO IS WORTHY? (REVELATION 5:1-5)

VERY UNCOMMON SCROLL

Chapter 5 takes place still in the throne room of God, where John notices a scroll with **writing on both sides** in the right hand of God, which was **sealed by seven seals**.

- Wax seals were customary in ancient times to **guard the contents of a scroll until the authorized person broke the seal and opened the scroll**.

SEALED ORDERS FOR THE UNIVERSE

The contents of the scroll are debated by scholars, but it is best to view the scroll as "God's will, His final settlement of the affairs of the universe." **The emphasis is not on the content of the scroll but on its seals and the One Who is worthy to open it.**

- Opening each of the seven seals upon the scroll will inflict **judgment on the godless and reward the God-fearing**.

WHO IS WORTHY?

A mighty angel proclaimed a challenge to all creation by asking, "**Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?**"

- No created being was worthy to carry out God's judgment**, since no created being in heaven or Earth had been tempted or felt the pressure to give in to sin and had come out victorious and holy.

"DO NOT WEEP. LOOK..."

John becomes a participant in the vision instead of just an observer as **he begins to weep loudly because he assumes that God's plan to judge evil has been postponed indefinitely**.

- John is told by one of the elders to stop weeping because **someone has been found worthy to open the scroll**.

THE PERFECT SAVIOR FROM AN IMPERFECT LINEAGE

The elder gives two titles for the One Who is worthy, the One Who fulfilled the Messianic prophecies of the OT: the **Lion from the tribe of Judah** (Genesis 49:9-10), and the **root of David** (Isaiah 11:10).

- Jesus is the Messiah, Who is worthy because He's been tempted, faced sin, came to earth, suffered, and conquered sin and death.**

THE LAMB (REVELATION 5:6-8)

THE LAMB AND SUFFERING SERVANT OF ISAIAH 53

There, standing in the midst of the throne, the 24 elders, and the four living creatures, **John sees one like a slaughtered lamb**.

- John looked, probably expecting to see a lion as he had been told, but instead, there stood a **lamb, very much alive, with the marks of sacrifice still upon Him**. John saw the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 53.

THE VICTOR OF THE UNIVERSE APPEARED AS A LAMB

Though the Lamb still bore the marks of a sacrifice, He was not to be pitied. His **7 horns** were the mark of **omnipotence (all-knowing)** and the **7 eyes** were the mark of **omniscience (all-seeing)**.

- Throughout Scripture, **eyes suggest knowledge and wisdom and horns suggest power. The lamb with 7 eyes and 7 horns had complete and perfect knowledge, wisdom, and power.**

WE CAN KNOW HIM, BUT NOT EXHAUSTIVELY

Previously, the Holy Spirit had been characterized as fiery torches and now **John describes the "seven spirits of God" as eyes upon the Lamb**.

- We see the complex nature of the Trinity—the Father on the throne, Jesus the Son as a slaughtered lamb, and the Holy Spirit. **He is one God in three persons. He is incomprehensible, and that is ok.**

WORTHY IS THE LAMB

Jesus was able to take the scroll from the hand of God, **demonstrating His worthiness and ability to unleash all the judgments contained in the scroll**.

- Jesus perfectly carries out what the Father has determined. This reminds us of the opening words, **"the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave Him"** (1:1).

PRAISES AND PRAYERS SURROUND THE THRONE

The response was instant. **With a harp and golden bowl filled with incense, each one fell down and worshiped the Lamb**.

- We see that the incense is the prayers of the saints (v. 8b). **Here, we see God's view of the prayers of His people: He sees them as sweet-smelling incense, so precious that they are brought to the throne in golden bowls.**

A NEW SONG (REVELATION 5:9-14)

"AND THEY SANG A NEW SONG"

The opening line of the new song answered the question of "**Who is worthy?**" posed by the elder in v. 2.

- Jesus (the Lamb) is worthy because of His willing sacrifice and the result of that sacrifice.** He purchased people "from every tribe and language and people and nation" for God by His blood.

"[JESUS] PURCHASED PEOPLE FOR GOD"

The verb used was the common word used in the business transaction of buying. Its usage here shows the effects of Jesus' sacrifice—**His blood given at the point of death on the cross as the price for admission into the Kingdom of God** (v. 10).

- A similar verb is used in the OT that is translated as redeemed, meaning **to be purchased and set free**.

REDEEMED TO REIGN WITH GOD

John is seeing the fulfillment of what God promised Israel through Moses (Exodus 19:6) and alludes to a future event where those purchased by God would "**reign on the earth**."

- One day, the Lamb's people will reign on the earth with their King as described in Revelation 21-22.**

A MULTITUDE OF ANGELS IN WORSHIP OF GOD

John's perspective pans out a little further and he "**looked and heard the voice of many angels**" and their "**number was countless**."

- The largest number in the Greek was 10,000, so John used the largest figure he could to communicate what he saw. What he saw was **an incalculable number of angelic beings worshipping God**.

"WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAUGHTERED"

Just like the song to the One on the throne, they sing that the Lamb is worthy to receive **power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing**.

- Jesus is worthy to receive all of these things because they first come from Him (James 1:17). **Whatever we have we owe back to Him!**

WHAT A SIGHT TO SEE

As if seeing a multitude of angels in worship wasn't impressive enough, John pans out even further to see "**every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them**" singing.

- John is seeing an event that will take place at **the future consummation of creation to the Creator** (Philippians 2:10-11).

IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT

As the song commences, John hears the four living creatures, representing all creation, in complete agreement with the Lamb's worthiness by saying, "**Amen**," which means "**may it be so**."

- There is no doubt Who the hero and main focus of Revelation is: **It is Jesus, the Victor, the Redeemer, the Lion, and the Lamb**.

THE PROPER RESPONSE

- When we truly understand the sacrifice of the Lamb, that He willingly gave His life to redeem us and purchase our freedom, the proper response is to **pray and praise**.
- We **pray to Him in thankfulness and praise Him for Who He is!**
- We acknowledge that **everything we have is from Him and due to Him!**

HE CAME TO SAVE US!

- The coming judgment is administered by the Lamb Who already **offered an escape from judgment by taking the punishment himself**.
- The Lord has done everything He can to redeem us!** The One worthy to open the scroll and judge has given His blood to save humanity, but **judgment will come upon those who reject the offer of escape**.