

## Revelation Lesson 6—Revelation 5

# The Lamb and the Scroll



### *Memorize the TRUTH!*

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing. Revelation 5:12

### **DAY 1: Revelation 5:1-4—The Scroll in God’s Hand**

1. After describing what he had seen in heaven’s throne room, John turned his focus to the scroll. What details recorded in 5:1 emphasize the scroll’s importance?
2. From the previous lesson, what does the number seven usually represent in Scripture? What might the presence of seven seals imply?
3. In verses 2 and 3, an angel asked who was worthy to break the seals and open the scroll, but no one was found worthy. Why do you think John was so troubled over this?



### *Learn the TRUTH!*

Later in this lesson, you will learn about the important part music has in the worship of heaven. Even while disaster is taking place on earth, the residents of heaven are singing praises to God and to the Lamb. What part does singing God’s praises have in your daily worship? How could you use music more to express your love for God? Plan to talk about this with your small group.

### **DAY 2: Revelation 5:5-7—The Lion and the Lamb**

4. How did the elder describe the one who was qualified to open the scroll?
5. In what way did Jesus conquer? (See also Colossians 2:13-15.) What does His triumph mean to you personally?
6. How would you compare the elder’s description in verse 5 with what John saw in verse 6?
7. In what ways do you see Jesus as a lion? In what ways as a lamb?

### **DAY 3: Revelation 5:8-10—A New Song**

8. What does verse 8 suggest to you about the value of our prayers?

9. How could this understanding encourage or challenge you?
  
10. On what basis did the elders and the four living creatures consider Jesus worthy to take and open the scroll?
  
11. According to verse 10, why did Jesus ransom us? How might this encourage you, or affect the way you live?

#### **DAY 4: Revelation 5:11-14—A Crescendo of Praise**

12. Describe the theme of the songs and the identity of the singers in each group (5:8-14).
  - a. Verses 8-10
  
  - b. Verses 11-12
  
  - c. Verse 13
  
13. “Worthy” means having merit or value; being honorable or admirable. For what reasons would you say Jesus is “worthy” of our praise and worship?
  
14. Have you learned anything about worship from your Revelation study so far that has helped you in your own experience of worshiping God?

#### **DAY 5: Revelation 5:9-14—The Lamb Is Worthy**

15. After rereading the choruses of praise to the Lamb in verses 9-14, think about who Jesus is to you personally, then write your own chorus of praise to the Lamb.



#### ***Apply the TRUTH!***

With His blood, Jesus ransomed people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation. His love reaches out to people of every race, ethnicity, and culture. Is your heart big like God's? Do you love people who come from different countries or cultures? Are you welcoming to people who have skin color different than yours? Or who speak a different language or dialect? Do your prayers involve intercession for suffering people around the world? Or for missionaries who bring the good news of Jesus to them? Expand your prayer vision to make it more global. Ask God to help you become a Christ follower who cares about all the people of the world as He does. Plan to share about this in your small group.

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#### **DAY 6: Participate in Class**

## Lesson 6 Commentary

# The Lamb and the Scroll

## Revelation 5

John had painted a vivid picture of heaven’s majestic throne room. Next, he described a profound event that takes place before God’s throne. It launches the events that follow in the rest of the book—and climaxes in God’s final overthrow of all the kingdoms of this age.

### The Scroll in God’s Hand

With holy awe, John looked to God seated on the throne. He noticed a scroll in God’s right hand. John noted that it had writing on both inside and outside. Scholars hold differing opinions about what the scroll represents.

Some note that similar scrolls, full of God’s coming judgment, are depicted in the Old Testament. After seeing visions of God’s throne, His glory, and the four living creatures (Ezekiel 1:4-28), the prophet Ezekiel mentioned a scroll. It had “writing on the front and on the back ... words of lamentation and mourning and woe” (Ezekiel 2:9-10). Zechariah 5:3 also depicts a double-sided scroll. On it is written “the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land.” God told Jeremiah to write on a scroll for Israel “all the disaster that I intend to do to them” (Jeremiah 36:1-3). Such parallels could indicate that John’s scroll contains details of coming judgment.

Some scholars suggest the scroll may contain God’s promises, law, or covenant. Others think that it may contain His plans, similar to the scroll described in Daniel 12:4. Still other scholars propose that the scroll contains a will or a title deed to the earth. Whatever the scroll contains, we sense that when it is opened, God’s decrees will be set in motion. The end of the fallen world will come.

But there is a problem: the scroll is sealed. The Old Testament explains that only one who is authorized can open the scroll’s seal. Isaiah stressed the need for authority to break a sealed scroll (see Isaiah 29:11). Daniel was told that the words contained in the scroll he saw were “sealed until the time of the end” (Daniel 12:9).

### Who Is Worthy?

A mighty angel proclaimed: “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” A search was made. However, no one in heaven or earth was found who was qualified to break the seals. John wept. He knew that liberation and redemption would occur when the scroll was opened and its decrees were fulfilled. But who could take the scroll from God’s hand, break its seals, and establish its promises?




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**Think about** why John wept. He knew how important it was for God’s scroll to be opened. All creation was groaning beneath the destruction and death that sin’s curse brings. If the scroll could be opened, God’s good plans would be put into action. Justice would triumph over evil. God’s beautiful new kingdom would come in all its fullness. But if no redeemer could be found to remove the curse, then God’s creation was forever doomed. Without a final redemption of our broken world, all hope is lost.

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One of the 24 elders encouraged John to “weep no more.” Someone *was* qualified to break open the sealed scroll. He has all the authority required to fulfill God’s kingdom decrees. He is “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” and “the Root of David”—both Messianic references to Jesus.

Jesus is the ultimate Lion of the tribe of Judah, a descendant of Israel’s royal line of David. As a lion, He has invincible power and authority to rule. But He is also described here as the Root of David. Jesus Himself said, “I am the root and the descendant of David” (22:16). He is both David’s creator and David’s physical descendant. He is the eternal conqueror from David’s family as well as the Son of God. He alone is qualified to break the seal and open the scroll of kingdom decrees.

## The Lamb Takes the Scroll

A Lamb appeared, standing between the elders and the throne. He looked as though He “had been slain,” referring to Jesus’s death as the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world (see John 1:29, 36). These verses also remind us that Jesus is the ultimate Passover Lamb (see 1 Corinthians 5:7). The “seven horns” indicate complete power to rule, as “horn” is often a symbol of power, and seven is the number of completeness or fullness. The “seven eyes ... the seven spirits of God” reflect His ability to see and know all things. The Lamb took the scroll from God’s hand.



**Think about** Jesus as both Lion and Lamb. Lions often symbolize royalty, ferocity, and power. Many of the events in Revelation show Jesus’s lion-like qualities. He is “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” His kingdom never ends. He conquers with strength. He rules with majesty. Yet throughout John’s vision, Jesus also is identified as “The Lamb.” In contrast to the lion’s fierce authority, a lamb is gentle, innocent, and defenseless. Lambs had special significance in Israel’s Passover tradition. According to Mosaic Law, God’s people offered a lamb “without blemish” to atone for their sins (Exodus 12:5). But when Jesus came, John the Baptist announced He was “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Jesus offered Himself as the once-for-all sacrifice for sin (see Hebrews 9:26; 1 Corinthians 5:7). He went willingly to His death for us, “like a lamb that is led to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7). And He is gentle and humble in heart (see Matthew 11:29).

## Worship in Heaven

The 4 living creatures and the 24 elders worshiped the Lamb because He was “worthy ... to take the scroll.” Each held a harp as they sang this “new song.” The incense in their golden bowls was “the prayers of the saints,” the praises and requests of God’s people throughout the ages (see also 6:9-10 and 8:1-5).

The worshipers declared that Jesus is worthy. By dying, He brought people from all nations and races into God’s kingdom. He paid their ransom with His blood.

The first chorus ended with, “They will reign on the earth.” Jesus redeemed a people for God. And the elders and living creatures anticipate the day when these ransomed ones will rule with Him in the new heaven and earth. The Lord’s model prayer says, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). When the kingdom with Jesus as King is fully realized, that prayer will be fully answered.

“Many angels ... thousands of thousands” joined the four living creatures and the elders in praising the Lamb. He is worthy, they announced, to receive “power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

The third chorus involved “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them.” Every voice in the universe joined in a resounding chorus of worship. All creatures in unison were giving praise “to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.” All creation agreed: God and the Lamb should receive “blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” Every created thing praises God. The elders bowed in worship as the four living creatures declared, “Amen.”



## Personalize the TRUTH!

The prayers of the saints are represented as golden bowls of incense—beautiful, valued, fragrant. How does this symbolic picture of the significance of your prayers in heaven’s throne room make you feel? How does it cause you to think about prayer? How would you like to respond as a result? Keep this image in mind as you pray this week.