

Revelation 5 (NASB) ***The Book with Seven Seals***

5:1 I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals.

The scroll and the Lamb become the focus of chapter 5. The scroll is at the right hand of God. The right hand of God indicates all power and authority. It was not common to write on both sides of a scroll. If the scroll described here is similar to the ones written at the time of Revelation, it would be 15 feet long. The Romans affixed 7 seals on their Roman last will and testament. This could indicate that these are God's final words on the matter. A scroll had 7 strings sealed with wax seals. The seals had to be opened in a particular order. Each of the seven seals represented a witness. What do you think is written on the scroll? (No one knows for sure so there are no wrong answers, as long as they don't violate known Scripture.) Some believe the names of the saved or future events or God's plans are written on the scrolls. Ezekiel 2:9-10 says *"Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it. 10 When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe."* (Great Tribulation) The content of the scroll is not emphasized here. The one holding the scroll and the seals is emphasized here.

5: 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. 4 Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it;

Gabriel is this strong angel. Gabriel issues a challenge asking Who is worthy to open the book. At this point, no one steps forward. Of course, this was a rhetorical question. Not only can no one open the scroll, no one can even open, look or read it. John weeps because nobody is good enough. But there is one. . .

*5:5 and one of the elders *said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."
6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. 7 And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*

One of the 24 elders comforts John. This elder was a person and not an angel. (Remember from chapter 4.) Jesus is first described as the Lion. The title, "the Lion" comes from the Lion of Judah prophesied by Hosea in Hosea 11:10. It says, *"They will walk after the Lord, He will roar like a lion."* (See also Genesis 49:9-10 and Isaiah 31:4.) The phrase "The root of David" comes from the tribe of Judah. After seeing Jesus as a lion, John immediately sees Him as the Lamb. The lamb is slain, yet shown standing and alive. This is important to understand because it is in reference to the crucifixion and ascension of Jesus. Even though the Lamb still bears the marks of His death, he is not shown as a pitiful figure, but as a figure of absolute authority. Throughout Scripture, Eyes represent knowledge (Zechariah 4:10 and 3:9) while horns represent power. The Lamb takes the scroll which indicates that all power was given to Jesus. In Matthew 28:18, *"Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth."*

*5:8 When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they *sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." Angels Exalt the Lamb*

Immediately as the authority is passed from the Father to the Son, the Four living creatures and the 24 elders all fall down and praise Jesus. (Rev 4:4 and Rev 4:8) Each of them has a harp and golden bowls. They present the golden bowls to the Lamb. The bowls contain our prayers (of the saints). Believers are commonly referred to as saints. This is important. The elders and four living creatures are not praying for the saints because we are already with God in Heaven. The prayers mixed with incense show that the prayers are sweet to God. Psalm 141:2a says *"May my prayer be counted as incense before You"*. God only keeps the prayers of the saints. Next, they sing a new song. It is a new song but they all know the words.

In chapter 4, Revelation's emphasis was on the throne. Here it is on the Lamb, He is the only one to redeem us to the Father.

The phrase "You were slain" shows the price of redemption.
The phrase "Have redeemed us" shows the path or destination of redemption.
The phrase "To God" shows the work of redemption.
The phrase "By your blood" shows the cost of redemption.
The phrase "every tribe . . ." shows the scope of redemption.
The phrase "Have made us kings and priests" shows the value of redemption.
The phrase "Shall reign on the earth" shows the result of redemption.

5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

This is not the same group and the same song as in verses 9-10. We know this because His blood redeems only believers and angels do not need saving. We know that angels don't need saving because of what it says in 1 Peter 1:12. *"They were told that their messages were not for themselves, but for you. And now this Good News has been announced to you by those who preached in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen.(NLT)* There are too many angels to count in these verses. This shows the power of God because He has power over all the angels and one angel has killed 185,000 men. Isaiah 37:36 - NLT says, *"That night the angel of the LORD went out to the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers."* Matthew 26:53 - NASB - *"Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"* There are 6,000 angels in 12 legions (Remember what one angel did).

5:13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.

John wrote "Every creature . . ." and he means everything created as in Genesis 1:1. (see Numbers 22:26-32.) - Psalm 148 lists everything that should praise God including the heavens, in all heights, all His angels, all His hosts, sun and moon, all stars of light, highest heavens . . . the list goes on and on. This Psalm means to verbally praise God or to cause people to praise God in the beauty of their existence. Verse 13 shows that there is no place that you can get away from God. Romans 1:25 says, "*They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.*"

This chapter ends with an amazing worship of God. In verse 14, the word "worship" translates as 'prosekynēsan'. God will be God for all eternity.