

Revelation 5: The Worthy Lamb

Double-sided scroll on the hand of God- Ezekiel 2.9f; Daniel 12.4; Isaiah 29.11; Jeremiah 36

A 1C scroll (*Biblion*) was made of strips of papyrus laid end to end and glued together to form a lengthy strip that could be rolled up. The papyrus was formed when strips of pith from a papyrus plant were laid in two layers at right angles to each other, then beaten, pressed, and smoothed to form a type of paper. They were often thirty feet long. Scrolls with writing on both sides were called opisthographs. Scrolls were sealed with wax or clay blobs marked by a signet ring. (Lemaire ABD 6:1003-4)

What is this scroll?

1. Lambs Book of Life: 3.5; 13.8; 17.8; 20.12-15; 21.27, containing the names of the redeemed
2. A doubly signed contract deed, sealed with a description of the contents written on the outside. (Roller, Lohse, Beasley-Murray, Beale)
3. A heavenly book 'containing God's redemptive plan and the future history of God's creation' (Caird, Ladd, Talbert, Mounce, Thomas), detailing the prophecies of Revelation and the judgment of God. (1 Enoch 47.3; 81.1-3; 106.19; 107.1)

'Seven seals' point to completeness, the perfect fulfillment of God's divine plan.

5.2-5: One Worthy to Open the Book

Angelon ischyron – a mighty angel

Tis axios – Who is worthy?

'In Heaven, on earth, under the earth' – common Jewish division (Exodus 20.4, 11; Job 11.8-9; Ps. 146.6)

Why is John weeping? (4.1)

5.5 – a word from one of the 24 elders. What does he say?

1 Corinthians 15.54: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

The Lion of Judah and the Root of Jesse –

Genesis 49.9: "Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?"

Isaiah 11.10: "In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations enquire, and his resting-place shall be glorious."

YHWH as a divine warrior: Job 10.16; Isaiah 31.4; Jer. 50.44; Hosea 5.14; Amos 3.8

The image underlines the Messiah's military prowess and victory over His enemies. (Geysler)

Root of Jesse – Matthew 1.1, 20; 9.7; 12.23; 15.22; 20.30-31

5.6-10: The Lamb Takes the Scroll

Why is the Lion transformed into a lamb?

The victory is won at the Cross!

The Paschal Lamb – Exodus 11-12; 29; Numbers 28-29

Isaiah 53.5-7: “But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.”

John 1.29, 35: “The next day he (John) saw Jesus coming towards him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”; Acts 8.32; 1 Cor. 5.7; 1 Peter 1.19

In Revelation, the Lamb has two aspects, the sacrificial lamb and the military ram, and they are interconnected, standing at the heart of the book and depicting the two sides of God's activity, His mercy and His justice. (Osborne 256)

Horns – 1 Enoch 90.9; Daniel 7.7, 20

Zechariah 4.10: “These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth.”

5.8-10: Worship of the Lamb

Harp – David's instrument (1 Samuel 16.16; Ps. 33.2; 57.8; 98.5; 147.7)

Golden bowls – placed on the table of the Bread of the Presence (Exodus 25.29; 37.16)

The ‘New Song’ (Isaiah 42.10): What is it about?

Purchased – egorasas: a commercial metaphor used for the freeing of a prisoner of war from bondage. (Schussler-Fiorenza). 1 Corinthians 6.19-20; 7.23; 2 Peter 2.1; Revelation 14.3-4)

The point: ‘Christ's sacrifice has made it possible for all of God's people drawn from the nations to be both royalty and priests in the New Kingdom of God.’ (Osborne 261); Daniel 7.14