

The Seven Seal Scroll

The Worthy Conqueror (Revelation 5)



Revelation 5:1-4

^{5:1} Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” ³ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, ⁴ and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

We'll consider the identity of the scroll in the next slide.

But notice the attention is not just on the scroll but that no one is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals.

Possible Interpretations of the Scroll

1. The purposes and plans of God relative to his rule of the world and his church.
2. Judgment sentence against Jerusalem for its part in shedding 'all the righteous blood' of the martyrs (Matt 23:35).
3. The New Covenant (and the passing away of the old) (Heb 8:13).
4. The title deed for the earth (or will) where the judgments reclaim God's control of the earth that was forfeited to Satan (Rev 8:1, 11:15).
5. The secret purposes of God to establish his kingdom.

For #2, Some see this specifically as a divorce certificate. Detailing God's judgment against Jerusalem for her adultery/idolatry.

Matthew 23:**33** You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? **34** Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, **35** so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. **36** Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

For #4, "When the seventh seal is opened, the trumpets sound (8:1) and when the seventh trumpet blows, Christ is said to receive the kingdoms of this world (11:15)."

Conclusion:

It seems best to see that all these are related and not far from one another.

This is about establishing the kingdom of God (11:15).

The emphasis is that no one is worthy to do this, save Christ.

The idea is not far from the kinsmen redeemer of the OT. He, the GodMan is

the only one worthy, he has died and risen again. He is the only one qualified to redeem the Creation.

But that redemption will start with the judgment of Jerusalem (preterist) or the world (futurist).

Revelation 5:5-6

⁵ And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

The next slide shows how this is a reference to the “worthy one” Christ.

The Worthy Conqueror

The “worthy” one is clearly Christ

- “Lion of the tribe of Judah”: a ruler, the kingly line (Gen 49:9).
- “Root of David”: David’s heir and rightful heir to the throne (Isaiah 11:1, 10; 9:6-7).
- “Lamb” that had been slain, but lives (Rev 1:18).
- “Seven horns”: complete power and authority (cf. Dan 7, Ps 75)
- “Seven eyes”: complete vision, seeing all, having all knowledge and wisdom through the “seven spirits” (i.e., the Holy Spirit).

We’re told that Christ already conquered (v. 5). We’ll be told how.

He already has the authority, and now it’s just a matter of cleaning up.

His conquering of death and sin now qualifies him to open the seals and bring to pass the plans and purpose of God (God’s rule and reign through his church over his adversaries).

**** Important:** The coming judgments are coming from Christ. He is the one opening the seals and orchestrating this judgment to bring to pass God’s kingdom on the earth.

Revelation 5:7-10

⁷ And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each 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 scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

Christ takes the scroll from the Father. Ready to bring about the purposes of God and establish his kingdom.

The response? Worship!

The four living creatures represent the created order, made to worship God. The twenty-four elders represent the saints from both Old and New Covenants (12 tribes + 12 apostles).

Their harps are instruments of worship. And their offering is a sweet smelling incense (which are the prayers of the saints).

Which prayers? Likely prayers for justice (Rev 6:10) asking Christ to come (Rev 22) and bring his judgment and purposes to pass.

A New Song? Revelation 5:9-10

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

Chapter 4 contained an old song. Praising God for his holiness and his worthiness due to his work of creation.

Chapter 5 they sing a new song (like Exodus 15) which celebrates the worth of the Lamb because of his redemption.

KEY THEME: Redemption through judgment. The judgment of the wicked is redemption for the righteous. (Judging the enslaver brings freedom to the slaves).

Theme here echoes Daniel 7 where the son of man receives the kingdom from the Ancient of Days.

Speaks to the efficacy of Christ's atonement. It was his blood that ransomed people from every tribe. (Not an offering for all made effective by faith).

A kingdom and priests. The old order is now over. The new covenant has begun. The kingdom and priests are now in the church rather than Israel and in Jerusalem.

Exodus 19:4-6, "You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. **5** Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; **6** and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

Futurists believe this kingdom is future (kingdom on earth). The tense here supports what most others conclude, the kingdom began at the first advent of Christ.

Revelation 5:11-14

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” ¹⁴ And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

The angels join in on this song of worship (v. 12).

So all creation is now praising Christ (v. 13).