

Revelation 5:1–14

The Worthy Lamb and the Redemption of the World

I. The Scroll in the Father's Hand (Revelation 5:1–4)

John writes:

“And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.”

This scroll is no ordinary book. It represents the title deed to the earth. Under Jewish law, property transactions included a sealed deed containing the terms of redemption and an open copy identifying the rightful redeemer. Redemption required both authority and worthiness.

After God created the earth and Adam, He entrusted the earth to Adam. When Adam chose to trust Satan instead of God, he placed himself under Satan's authority and became his slave. In doing so, everything Adam possessed—including the earth and his future descendants—came under Satan's dominion.

The terms of redemption required death. A holy and sinless human had to die to pay the price of redemption for Adam, his descendants, and the earth itself. Only such a sacrifice could satisfy the righteous requirement and restore what had been lost.

A mighty angel proclaims:

“Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?”

The response is devastating—no one in heaven, on earth, or under the earth is found worthy. John's reaction is immediate and intense:

“So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.”

John understands the implication. If no one can redeem the earth, it remains forever under the dominion of sin and Satan. His sorrow is overwhelming.

Application:

Humanity has always looked for saviors—political leaders, religious systems, philosophies—but no human being is worthy to redeem the world. No one can fix what sin has broken.

II. The Meaning of Redemption (Biblical Background)

The Old Testament provides a clear picture of redemption in Jeremiah chapter 32. Though Jerusalem was about to fall, Jeremiah purchased land as an act of faith, sealing the deed and preserving it until the time of restoration.

Redemption required:

- A rightful redeemer
- The ability to pay the price
- The willingness to redeem

The scroll in Revelation five follows this exact pattern.

Originally, the earth belonged to God by creation:

“The earth is the LORD’s, and all its fullness.”

God entrusted dominion to Adam, but Adam forfeited that authority through disobedience. Scripture repeatedly affirms that Satan became the ruler of this fallen world. Jesus Himself referred to him as “the ruler of this world.”

When Satan tempted Jesus, he offered Him the kingdoms of the world, claiming authority over them—and Jesus did not dispute that claim.

The world is fallen, rebellious, and broken—not because God failed, but because humanity joined Satan’s rebellion.

III. The Worthy One Revealed (Revelation 5:5–7)

One of the elders comforts John:

“Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll.”

John turns expecting to see a Lion—but instead he sees:

“A Lamb as though it had been slain.”

The conquering Lion is the sacrificial Lamb. The marks of slaughter remain visible. Redemption was not achieved by power, but by sacrifice.

Jesus Christ alone is worthy because He alone is sinless. Every other human died for his own sin. Jesus died for the sins of others.

Scripture declares:

“You were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

The price of redemption was blood—His blood.

Jesus steps forward and takes the scroll from the Father’s hand. Redemption now moves from promise to execution.

IV. The Worship of the Redeemed (Revelation 5:8–10)

When the Lamb takes the scroll, heaven erupts in worship:

“Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.”

They hold golden bowls filled with incense which represent:

“Which are the prayers of the saints.”

For centuries God’s people prayed:

“Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Those prayers were not forgotten. They rise now before the throne at the appointed time.

They sing a new song:

“You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”

Only the redeemed can sing this song. Angels cannot. Israel alone cannot. This is the song of the church (the ekklesia)—redeemed from every corner of the earth by the blood of Jesus Christ.

They continue:

“And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.”

Redemption restores not only relationship, but purpose and authority.

V. The Chorus of Heaven (Revelation 5:11–12)

John hears an innumerable host of angels declaring:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

Angels cannot sing of redemption, but they fully proclaim His worthiness.

Soon, all creation joins in:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

Heaven ends where it began—with worship.

Practical Application

You were created for God's pleasure—not your own. Redemption restores us to that purpose. When we live for ourselves, life remains empty. When we live for Christ, fulfillment follows.

Ask yourself:

- Who truly rules my life?
- Am I living as one who has been redeemed?
- Have I surrendered ownership of my life to the Lamb?

A Challenge for Believers

Lay your crown—your ambitions, rights, and self-rule—at His feet. Live now in light of the redemption that is coming. Do not invest your heart in a world that is passing away.

The Lamb is worthy. Live like you believe it.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

Jesus Christ shed His blood to redeem you. He took the judgment for your sin upon Himself. He rose from the dead, proving He is God, Savior, and Lord.

The One who is worthy to open the scroll is worthy to rule your life.

If you will turn from sin and trust in Him today, He will forgive you, restore you, and make you part of His redeemed family.

Redemption is available. The price has been paid.
All that remains is your response.

“Worthy is the Lamb.”