

## **Lesson Six**

### **Vision of the Sacred Scroll (5:1-14)**

The breaking of the seven-fold sealed scroll prepared for the unveiling of the contents within the scroll. The majority of the contents of the seven seals are clear to understand. The great debate is the historical time of the seals. Do they describe the Great Tribulation or events that lead up to the Great Tribulation? Two important details may offer sufficient reasoning to assume the seals describe events that lead up to the time of the Great Tribulation.

- The first seal, the rider on the white horse, is the best clue for interpretation. If seal one represents the anti-Christ, then the seven seals describe the Great Tribulation. As we discuss below, this is not the best interpretation. Therefore, it is best to understand the seven seals as events leading up to the Great Tribulation.
- The fifth seal describes martyrs under the altar of heaven crying out, “How long will it be before God revenges our blood?” If this described the time of the Great Tribulation, the answer is a clear 3 ½ years. The Tribulation time of 3 ½ years is clear theme throughout Revelation.

The scroll contains all known major events in the consummation of human history. Revelation concludes with a curse upon people who add to the prophecies recorded in Revelation (22:18).

5:1. God held the scroll in His dominate hand. The future is in the control of God. A seal on a document protected it from corruption. It prohibited errant recipients from knowing and altering its contents. Why seven seals? Seven is the divine number. The book belongs to God.

5:2-5. No one is worthy to open the book of the destiny of mankind. No one in heaven, on earth, or under the earth is worthy. Satan does not have sufficient power to determine the destiny of man. John stands weeping because he in not worthy! The Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy. In our symbolic animal code lion represents sovereignty. The sovereign Jesus is worthy to open the destiny of mankind. King Jesus “has overcome,” so He is worthy!

5:6. John looks and the Lion is suddenly a slain lamb. Here we see the two-fold ministry of Jesus. First, He was the sacrificial and vicarious lamb who atoned for the sins of man. Second, He is the triumphal and sovereign King of kings and Lord of lords. Seven horns represent divine or perfect power. Seven eyes represent divine oversight or the omniscience of God through the Holy Spirit. The lamb is seen in the middle of the throne room of God. Heaven is Jesus-centered!

5:7-8. The lamb takes the book from the Father seated on the throne. History is in the control of God the Father, and the Father gives the unveiling of the future to His Son. Heaven erupts into praise. The harp or lyre commonly accompanied singing/worship in the Psalms. Golden bowls of incense are the prayers of the saints. Gold symbolizes worth. Incense was a fragrance used in the Temple, God’s house of prayer. Saint is the most common term for Christian in the NT and Revelation (5:8; 8:3,4;11:18; 13:7,10;14:12;15:3; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:8; 20:9). They may be praying for the Kingdom of God to come to earth (Matt.6:9) or for Christ to return (8:3).

5:9-10. The song is new because of its content. The song is praise to worthy-Jesus because the time has come for him to reveal the destiny of man. It is also praise to Jesus for the blood atonement of his people on earth. The first half of verse 10 is a repeat of 1:6. The second half is a definitive statement in support of premillennialism.

5:11-14. John sees an innumerable number of angels joining the four living creatures and 24 elders in praise to Jesus. Verse 12 offers a seven-fold praise to Jesus. Verse 13 foresees the time when every created order gives honor to Jesus (cp. Phi.2:10-11; Eph.1:10).