



THE THRONE, THE SCROLL, THE LAMB
A HEAVENLY DRAMA IN REVELATION 4 & 5

REVELATION IS THE GRAND CULMINATION OF THE BIBLICAL STORY

RC Sproul highlights that to fully comprehend Scripture, we must see the Old Testament reach its fulfillment in the New. The book of Revelation is a prime example, weaving together themes, content, and images from the Old Testament.



Whatever view you take of this book, one thing comes through loudly and clearly, and that is *the triumph of Christ and of His kingdom over all of the forces of evil in this world.*"



A Glimpse Behind the Veil: The Throne Room of Heaven

In his vision, the apostle John is brought into the inner sanctum of heaven. He describes a scene of overwhelming majesty:

- ❖ A throne set in heaven, with one seated upon it.
- ❖ The one on the throne had the appearance of “jasper and sardius stone.”
- ❖ A rainbow “in appearance like an emerald” surrounded the throne.
- ❖ Twenty-four elders sat on surrounding thrones, clothed in white robes with crowns of gold.

“Immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold a throne set in heaven.”
- Revelation 4:2

From the Throne Proceeded Lightnings and Thunderings

The scene is not serene; it is alive with cosmic energy. John witnesses:

- ‘Lightnings and thunderings and voices’ coming from the throne.
- A ‘sea of glass like crystal’ before the throne.
- Four living creatures ‘full of eyes in front and in back.’
 - The first was like a **lion**.
 - The second was like a **calf**.
 - The third had a face like a **man**.
 - The fourth was like a flying **eagle**.



A Vision Strikingly Familiar to the Old Testament

The imagery John uses is not random; it is deeply rooted in the visions of Israel's prophets, establishing a continuity of God's revelation.

Connection 1: Ezekiel's Vision

The description of the throne, the sea of glass, and the four living creatures is “almost identical” to the prophet Ezekiel’s vision of God’s “chariot throne” by the river Chabar (Ezekiel 1).



Connection 2: Isaiah's Vision

The ceaseless cry of the six-winged creatures—“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty”—directly mirrors the song of the seraphim that the prophet Isaiah heard when he saw the Lord “high and lifted up” (Isaiah 6).



In the Right Hand of Him on the Throne, a Scroll

A scroll appears, held by the one on the throne. Its properties immediately signal its immense importance:

- It is written on both the inside and the back—an extraordinary feature for ancient scrolls, which were customarily written on only one side.
- It is securely sealed with seven seals.



Echoes of Ezekiel

This echoes the scroll God presented to Ezekiel, which was also written on both sides and “contained woes and laments and grief and mourning.” This suggests the scroll in Revelation is one of God’s judgment on wickedness.

WHO IS WORTHY TO OPEN THE SCROLL AND TO LOOSE ITS SEALS?

A strong angel proclaims this question with a loud voice. The question itself creates what Sproul calls a ‘sense of dramatic anticipation and tension.’ The literary form feels like a drama unfolding in several acts. The hero is needed to step onto the stage and reveal the scroll’s secrets.

A Cosmic Silence: No One Was Found Worthy

The search is universal and exhaustive. The verdict is absolute.

“And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look at it.”

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



“All of the tension of anticipation comes crashing into profound disappointment.” Sproul

“WEEP NO MORE; BEHOLD, THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH”

One of the elders intervenes, redirecting John’s (and our) attention from despair to a promised victor.

This title is rich with Old Testament meaning:

Lion of Judah

An image tracing back to Genesis, where Jacob gives the promise of the kingdom to his son Judah, the “lion’s whelp.”

Root of David

A reference to the Messianic line descending from King David, who was also known as the Lion of Judah.

The stage is set for a powerful, regal, conquering king—‘David’s greater son’—to enter.



AND I LOOKED... AND BEHELD A LAMB

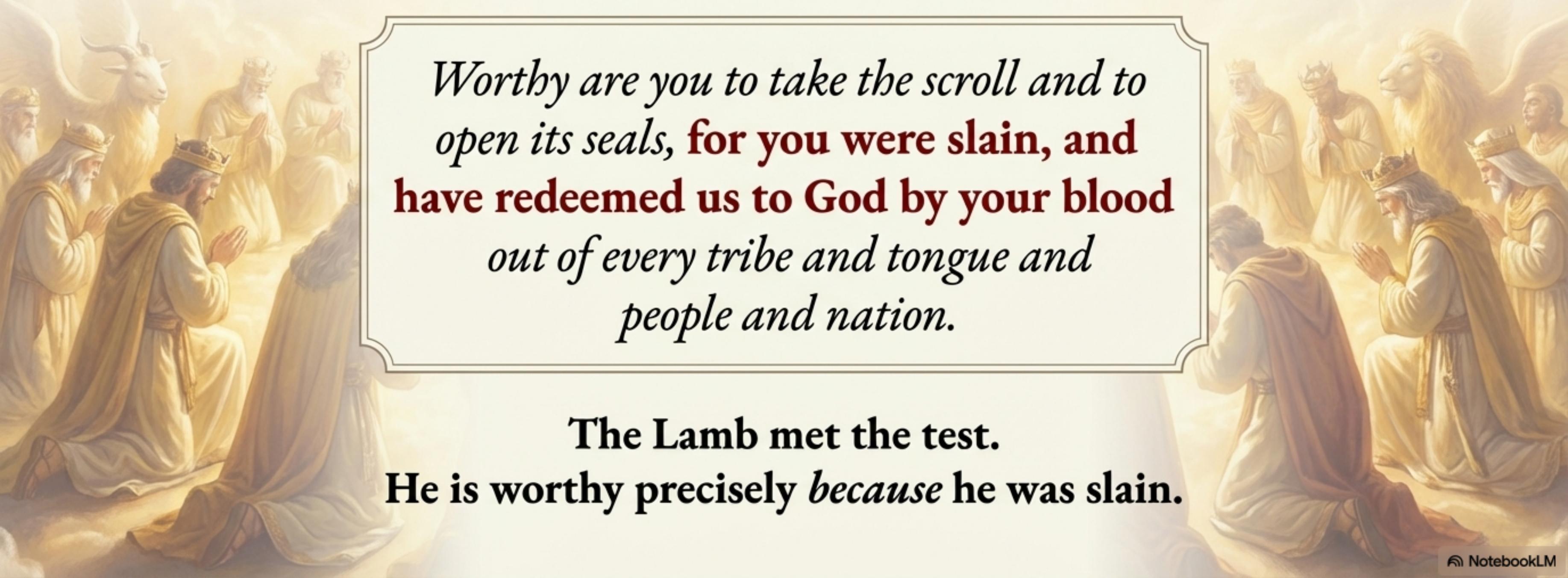
“And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne... stood a Lamb as though it had been slain.” – Revelation 5:6



John is waiting for a magnificent beast in the fullness of its strength. Instead, he sees a symbol not of power, but of sacrifice; not of exaltation, but of humiliation. He sees the “suffering servant of God.” This is the hero who has prevailed.

WORTHINESS IS DEFINED BY SACRIFICE, NOT STRENGTH

As the Lamb takes the scroll, the four living creatures and twenty-four elders fall down before Him. They sing a “new song” that explains the source of His worth.



*Worthy are you 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.***

**The Lamb met the test.
He is worthy precisely *because* he was slain.**

A “NEW SONG” FOR A NEW VICTORY

SONGS OF PAST REDEMPTION

Throughout the Old Testament, “new songs” were composed to celebrate a new act of redemption God performed for His people...



SONG OF MOSES



SONG OF DEBORAH

THE SONG OF ULTIMATE VICTORY

This new song, sung by the saints in heaven, celebrates the greatest victory of all. The Lamb has “fulfilled his mission,” accomplished his vocation, and now appears in heaven to receive his reward and his throne.



THE CHORUS SWELLS TO MYRIADS OF MYRIADS

The worship spreads. John hears the voice of many angels surrounding the throne, the living creatures, and the elders.



“The number of them was 10,000 times 10,000, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

- Revelation 5:11-12

Every Creature in Heaven and on Earth Sings in Unison

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “**Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!**”

– Revelation 5:13

THE UNDENIABLE MESSAGE: THE LAMB HAS PREVAILED

RC Sproul concludes that while Christians may differ on interpretations of Revelation (preterist, futurist, etc.), the core message is not up for debate. The good news is that we can take any of those positions and still get this message.

“The one thing that is certain is that the Lamb has prevailed and has entered into his glory.” It is this Lamb who holds the book in which the destinies of his people are sealed. His victory, won through sacrifice, is the promise of our own.

