

Worthy Is the Lamb

Key Verse: “*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*”
—**Revelation 5:12**

Selected Scripture:
Revelation 5:6-13

THE BIBLE IN MANY PLACES

declares God’s intention of blessing all the families of the earth in a coming righteous kingdom. The Scriptures additionally paint a beautiful picture of that kingdom, when God’s favor will return to men. He will wipe away all the tears of thousands of years of the pain of this present evil world, and be the God of all mankind.—Rev. 21:3,4

The establishment of such a kingdom, however, would need someone to rule who was worthy of that position. Today’s lesson, through the words of John the Revelator, identifies this one, so used from the beginning through the completion of God’s plan. In this vision of God’s throne, we at first see God holding a book that no one was able to open, and John “wept much” as a result.—Rev. 5:1-4

The lack of a worthy one to open this “book” of life was the condition at the beginning of God’s plan, after man’s fall from perfection. God’s justice required a corresponding price to ransom Adam from the curse of death caused by his disobedience. A perfect man had to die to release another man, who had been perfect, from the sentence of death. Jesus, in his prehuman existence as the *Logos*, knew of the need for this corresponding price and volunteered to provide it himself.—Ps. 40:7,8; Isa. 6:8

The mere act of volunteering, however, did not meet all of God's requirements. The corresponding price must be of human stock, and had to be proven obedient until death. For over four thousand years man had lived and died with no chance of recovery from death until the arrival of Jesus, now "made [born] of a woman." (Gal. 4:4) When Jesus was about to begin his ministry, John the Baptist recognized the promised one and declared of Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) God also acknowledged Jesus after his baptism, when there came "a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17) For the next three and a half years, Jesus, obediently and without sin, carried out his Father's plan, culminating in his death upon the cross, thereby purchasing Adam and all his posterity. "Since by man [Adam] came death, by man [Jesus] came also the resurrection of the dead."—I Cor. 15:21

The prophets had all pointed to Jesus as the one who would be worthy of sitting on David's throne in the kingdom to bless mankind. This is reaffirmed twice in the throne scene of our lesson. "One of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. 5:5) Jacob had spoken of this "Lion" of "Judah" many centuries earlier (Gen. 49:9,10), prophetically pointing to Jesus. In the sixth verse of our lesson, we read again of John the Revelator's description of this worthy one as a "Lamb as it had been slain."

Our lesson concludes with a joyous scene, in which acknowledgement is made of the presence of one worthy to open the book of life: "They sang a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men . . . from every tribe and language and people and nation.'" —Rev. 5:9, *New International Version* ■