



[Revelation 5:9-10](#)

(9) And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; (10) And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

King James Version

The issue in the vision of Revelation 5 is finding One who is [qualified to open a certain scroll](#) that contains a listing of events that will occur beyond the present time, both before and after Christ's return. The issue is resolved because Christ, the Lamb, is qualified to open it because of what He has already accomplished. He is our Redeemer and thus qualified. His qualification sets an example for us to follow in our Christian lives.

Verse 10 concerns us most. It helps to know that the term “kings and priests” is better translated as “kingdom of priests,” as numerous modern translations render it. Christ has appointed the redeemed (verse 9) as a kingdom of priests to serve our [God](#) and to bear a measure of rulership (“we shall reign on the earth”). They are appointed to a responsibility by Christ because they, like Him, have been prepared to render these services in God's behalf.

Beyond the priestly functions, rulership is clearly in view for the redeemed. Christ will appoint only those already prepared for these positions. Both rulership and priestly functions contain shepherding responsibilities. A priest is an individual especially consecrated to the service of a deity as a mediator between the deity and his worshippers.

Note two passages of Scripture that confirm what we are being prepared for:

» You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through [Jesus](#)

[Christ](#). . . . But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. ([1 Peter 2:5](#), 9)

» They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ([Revelation 14:3-4](#))

Both of these future positions help us focus on what we are to do within our calling now before the events of Revelation 5 and 14 occur. We must prepare to lead in the [Kingdom of God](#). The world's approach to salvation focuses almost exclusively on being saved by confessing Jesus Christ as Savior. As important as that is, it pays little attention to any other purpose and responsibility attached to it.

However, this period prior to our ultimate admission into the Kingdom of God has a major purpose: to be prepared to continue serving God at a remarkably higher level of responsibility after Christ returns. We are being created into Jesus Christ's image, and leadership is what God is looking for in us. He does not need to see us leading vast numbers of people, but He wants to see leadership in spiritual growth as we overcome our carnal natures.

How? We are to be living sacrifices, deliberately choosing to allow ourselves to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ through obediently following His way of life. If we lead others in this life, it is primarily by example, as we are not forcing God's way on others.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:
[Leadership and Covenants \(Part Four\)](#)

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