

Lion of the Tribe of Judah!

Read **Revelation 5:1-14**.

Before Jacob (Israel) died, he blessed each one of his sons. Let's take a look at what he said to his fourth son, Judah (Genesis 49:9-10).

Even though Judah was not the oldest son—Jacob blessed Judah with the promise that the Messiah would come from his family, his line, his tribe.

Jacob called Judah "a lion's cub," "a lion," and "a lioness," basically promising Judah and his descendants would be like lions—powerful and proud, and they would rule—no one would remain standing against Judah.

About 2000 years after this prophecy was made — 60+ years after *Jesus, the Lamb of God, was put to death on a cross for our sins, buried, and on the third day rose from the grave* — John was given a great vision of heaven, looking into the very throne room of God.

John saw a scroll in the Lord's right hand. It had writing on it and it was sealed with seven wax seals that must be broken before it could be read. At this point, an angel shouted (**Revelation 5:2**), "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" No one stepped forward, and John was heartbroken. But then, one of the elders said (**Revelation 5:5**), "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.

God showed John the fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy, i.e., the Lamb is also the Lion - ferocious as the king of the beasts, yet gentle as a lamb.

Lions are magnificent animals, powerful and deadly predators, up to 10 feet in length (without tail), weighing over 500 lbs., standing 4 ft. at the shoulders, with 4" canines, and a roar that can be heard five miles away!

Revelation 5:6, "Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders."

Jesus humbly, willfully, and sovereignly fulfilled God's plan, purpose, and provision. He was silent before His accusers, then flogged and turned over to be crucified, just as **Isaiah** predicted (**53:7**), "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open his mouth."

John the Baptizer said (**John 1:29**), "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

2Corinthians 5:21, "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

1Peter 2:22-24, "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth. When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed."

The Lamb of God was put to death for our sins, He then rose from the dead to demonstrate resurrected life.

1Peter 3:18-20a, "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built."

Jesus' body died, yet He was alive in spirit, and He went to the demons who are imprisoned in the deepest part of hell, the abyss, to proclaim God's victory.

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah has declared victory, for He has defeated and conquered sin, death, and the punishment of hell, for anyone who would confess their sins and trust in Him as Savior.

1Corinthians 15:54-57, "Death has been swallowed up in victory.' 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Not even death can harm those who belong to God! There is a fantastic story in **John 11:11-27** about Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus, who had died.

Jesus came to grieve with the family; He would do much more than that. Jesus said, (**v. 11**), "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." The disciples don't get it (**v. 12**), they say "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." But Jesus makes it very clear (**v. 14**), "Lazarus is dead," and then Jesus says He is glad He wasn't there when it happened, (**v. 15**), "so that [His disciples] might [see and] believe."

Jesus arrives (**v. 17**) with His disciples, Lazarus has been "four days in the tomb."

Martha says (**v. 21**), "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Then she says (**v. 22**), "But I know even now God will give you whatever you ask." Jesus says (**v. 23**), "Your brother will rise again."

Martha responds (**v. 24**), "Yes, I know he will rise at the resurrection" [of believers]. Jesus says (**vv. 25-26**), "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" Martha answers (**v. 27**), "Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

Jesus walks to Lazarus' tomb (**John 11:39-44**). What amazing authority and power Jesus displayed - raising the dead to life - (**Romans 1:3-4**), "regarding [God's] Son, who... through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord."

John 10:17-18, "The reason my Father loves Me is that I lay down My life--only to take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Jesus, the Lamb of God, humbly and willfully laid down His own life for us, by His own authority, fulfilling God's plan, purpose, and provision, while His people, the Jews, rejected Him as Messiah and reviled Him as a blasphemer.

Prior to His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus stated that He would be arrested, put to death, buried, and on the third day He would rise from the grave. Nothing could deter God's Son from His sovereign mission as the Lamb and the Lion of God, and neither death nor the grave could hold Him (**Rev. 5:5-7; 6:1**).

History, the Bible, and the testimony of the Church validate that Jesus was put to death on a Friday and His body was placed in a tomb, but Sunday morning His body was missing; and over the next 40 days, before ascending back into heaven, Jesus appeared to hundreds of those who genuinely believed in and followed Him.

When Jesus comes back, it won't be as God's humble & gentle Lamb, but as God's ferocious & fearsome Lion; and His roar will be heard throughout the universe. To those who love and worship Him, He is God's Lamb of sacrifice and payment for our sins; He is also God's Lion of protection and provision forever! To those who oppose and reject Him, He is their Righteous and Eternal Judge, and Sovereign Executioner.

Revelation 1:17-18, "I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades."

John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father accept through Me." In **Acts 4:12**, Peter proclaims that there is only one way to be saved - through Jesus Christ. (cf. **Romans 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 8:1; 10:9-10, 13**)

The empty tomb proclaims the victory of God's Lamb, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; and all heaven will one day proclaim (**Revelation 11:15**), "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever."

He has Risen!