

The Seven Sealed Book

Rev. 5

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In verses 1 thru 7 of this chapter we have the key to the remainder of this book. It is absolutely mandatory that we have the right interpretation of the mysterious little book or scroll. This little seven-sealed book in the hand of the one on the throne contains the secret of the chapters which follow and is the key which opens the entire book of Revelation. A mistake here and you will be wrong all the way.

What is the "Seven Sealed Book"? Writing to the Ephesians (1:13-14), Paul said—"Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest (down payment) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Then there is a possession that is to be redeemed. What this is, Paul tells us in Rom. 8:22-23. "We know that the whole creature groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they (all earthly created things), but ourselves also, which have the "First fruits of the Spirit", even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." This will take place at the first resurrection.

We see from these references that there is something that was lost to mankind and the earth that is to be redeemed, and we do not have to go far to find out what it was. It is the inheritance of the earth and of immortal life given to Adam and Eve, and that was lost in the Fall of Eden. When Adam sinned he lost his inheritance of the earth, and it passed out of his hands, into the possession of Satan, to the disinheritance of all of Adam's seed. The forfeited Title Deed is now in God's hands and is awaiting redemption. Its redemption means the legal repossession of all that Adam lost by the 'Fall'. Adam was impotent to redeem the lost possession, but the law provides (Lev. 25:23-34) that a kinsman may redeem a lost possession. That Kinsman has been provided in the person of Jesus Christ. To become a kinsman He had to be born into the human race. This the Virgin Birth accomplished.

Jesus paid the Redemption Price, which was His own Blood, on the Cross (I Pet. 1:18-20), but He has not as yet claimed that which He then purchased. When the time comes for the redemption of the purchased possession Jesus will do so. That time and the act are described in the scripture we are now considering. The "Seven Sealed Book" is the "Title Deed" to the redeemed inheritance. It Old Testament days when a kinsman desired to redeem a property he took his position, with ten men (Elders) as witnesses, in the gate of the city and advertised his purpose. This is beautifully illustrated in the story of Boaz and Ruth. Ruth 4:1-12. The kinsman who redeemed the property was called the "Goal" or redeemer.

When the “strong angel” proclaimed with a loud voice—“Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the Seals thereof?” that was the advertisement for the “Kingsman Redeemer” to appear. But, said John, there was no Man (redeemed man) in Heaven, nor in Earth, neither under the Earth, who was able to open the Book, neither to look therein. It was not a question of the worthiness of some angelic being, as Michael or Gabriel, to open the Book but of a Man. John then wept because he knew what the Book was, and that if there was no one to open the “Book of Redemption”, that all hope of the redemption of the earth and of man was gone. Sorrow didn’t continue for the announcement was made that one was found worthy. Then John saw, what he had not noticed before a Lamb, as it had been slain, standing in the midst of the Throne, and of the “Four Living Creatures”. John had not seen the Lamb before, because it (He) had been seated on the Throne with the Father, and advanced out of the Glory of the Throne as the Elder spoke.

Note: In John’s day, books were written on scrolls—pieces of papyrus or vellum up to 30 feet long, rolled up and sealed with clay or wax. The scroll John sees contains the full account of what God had in store for the world. The seven seals indicate the importance of the contents. The seals are located throughout the scroll so that as each one is broken, more of the scroll can be read to reveal another phase of God’s plan for the end of the world.

V1. “And” This indicates more of the subject of Chapter 4 where the throne is the center subject. This section shows us the Lion and the Lamb.

“I saw”: John is now witness to the work of God unfolding.

“Right hand of Him that set”: John saw a “hand” extending out the scroll. God is the director of these events written which are an account of His purpose and counsel for the world. Notice there is still no form or face mentioned just the right hand seen.

“Book”: This is the title deed for the world. Dan.7:13-14 “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him, and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

Zech. 5:1-3 “Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll and He said unto me, ‘What seest thou?’ And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said He unto me, this is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the

whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and everyone that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it.”

Within this scroll will be seen the New Covenant with Israel. The period of “Jacob’s Trouble” is designed to deal with the nation and the promises God had given them. Jer. 31: 31-33; Rom. 11:26, 27; Heb. 10:16. Much is to be discovered within this “book” as it is unsealed. “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.” “It is His glory to conceal a matter as He pleases.”

“Written within and on the backside”: Upon looking John saw it written on the outside and knew the inside would have writing.

“Sealed with seven seals”: Wax sealing which often would have the signet of the one in charge. Jesus’s tomb was sealed with such a signet. The seals will be opened in order as the scroll is unrolled. Seven denotes the completeness of the work of Revelation. Mat. 13:11 “The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”. No longer, as in Daniels time, is the subject to be shut-up but revealed in order.

V2. “Strong angel”: This powerful angel comes on the scene not only as a crier but as a champion with a challenge to any or all to attempt to open the scroll being presented.

“Proclaiming with a loud voice”: His was the place to make sure everyone understands the importance of the scroll before everyone and setting up the truth that the events within are beyond the ability of any except for one.

“Who is worthy to open and loose the seals?” Here is the challenge proclaimed. Come forth and make an attempt. Who has a rank so exalted to perform this task? It will be discovered that no one in the natural universe by office or character would be able to open the scroll.

V3. “No man”: Rom. 3:23 “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God?”

“In heaven”: Denoting not even the angels can penetrate the future.

“In earth”: This is referring to all classes of man; the “prophets”, divines, sages, the fallen angels, not even Lucifer.

“Under the earth”: In the world beyond the grave.

“Open—look therein”: The seals were beyond all their power, the reading within was therefore unknowable.

V4. “Wept much”: All apparent efforts had failed and were completely in the dark. John is indicated as wailing continually.

“Because”: No one could look (read) it. Hope deferred makes the heart sick.

V5. “One of the elders”: The representative of the church who was given understanding.

“Weep not”: This is indicating a stopping of despair for the mysteries of the scroll would become known.

“Behold” Means to take note. It especially means to take heed.

“Lion of the Tribe of Judah”: Gen. 49:9-10 “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”

“Root of David”: II Sam. 7. The word means a sprout from a fallen decayed tree.

“Prevailed to open and loose”: This is denoting the fact that Jesus had the power because of His victory in the conflict and struggle for man’s soul. There is only one mediator.

V6. “Midst of—stood a Lamb as had been slain”: He has a prominent position between God, the living creatures, and the four and twenty elders. Lamb here is a little lamb. Isa. 53:7 “He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.”

Jn. 1:29 "The next day, John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, 'Behold the Lamb of God', which taketh away the sin of the world."

What John is seeing is the wounds in the hands of Jesus.

Zech. 13:6 "And one will say to Him, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" Then He shall answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

John 20:27 "Then saith he to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger (meaning in the print of the nails), and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.'" This is the resurrected body of Jesus in consideration here.

"Stood": Jesus is no longer sitting at the right hand of God. He begins his mission to fulfill God's purpose. He will become the righteous judge of all mankind.

"Seven horns": His will be unlimited power (horns). Seven is completeness. He is omnipotent and will exhibit total dominion.

"Seven eyes": The language is indicating complete knowledge. He is omniscient.

"Seven Spirits of God": This denotes the complete operations of the one Divine Spirit who is always connected with the work of the Redeemer.

"Sent forth into all the world": This is showing that the Spirit has been poured-out so as to survey all things and to operate everywhere.

V7. "He came and took the book out of": This is the very moment that Jesus changes from the intercessor of the "times of the gentiles" and is now going to be the judge of the world.

V8. "When four beasts (living creatures) and four and twenty elders": This is the acts of adoration that are due the Redeemer.

“Fell down”: This is the usual position of profound worship shown throughout the Bible. Mat. 2:2; I Cor. 14:25.

“Harps”: An instrument well known for use as praise.

“Golden Vials”: This is a bowl with a neck. A goblet.

“Full of odours”: Bowls of incense.

“Prayers of Saints”: Psa. 141:2 “Let my praise be set forth before thee an incense, and the lifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice”. This denotes the sending up of our petitions to God and the fact that they are a sweet smell to Him.

V9. “Sung a new song”: A song of redemption. The Bride of Christ has been given the finished product.

“Worthy to”: Jesus allows us to walk under His victory. He was made lower than the angels for the suffering of death taking our sins and becoming our substitute as the God Man. He is the only one who could do this. He is the only one to every walk in obedience to the Law of God. He became the high priest who went into the Holy of Holies and took His own blood for the price needed before a just God.

“Was slain and redeemed us to God by His blood”: “Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. He paid our debt. He became as sin who knew no sin so we could receive righteousness who had none. He purchased us by His blood.

“Out of every”: Denoting every tribe, language, people, and nation.

V10. “Made....us kings and priests”: I Pet. 2:9 “royal priesthood”. Exod. 19:6 “and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests”. Kings is denoting an exalted rank and dignity. Priests as meaning to be engaged in holy service.

“We shall reign on the earth”: There is a day coming when during the 1,000 year reign of Christ that He will rule in total holiness.

V11. "And I beheld": This is indicating that John looked again to behold this vision.

"Voice of many angels": This is showing the universal sympathy and harmony in heaven. They are united in praise to the Lamb of God. I Pet. 1:12 teaches us the angels, at one point, had the "desire to look into" the things of God. These things have been revealed by God to His Bride according to Eph. 3:9-11. "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Bible teaches us the purpose of angels. Angels are created beings created by God who help carry out His work on earth. They bring messages (Luke 1:26-28; protect God's people (Dan. 6:22), offer encouragement (Gen. 16:7), give guidance (Exod. 14:19), bring punishment (II Sam. 24:16), patrol the earth (Ezek. 1:9-14), and fight the forces of evil (II Kings 6:16-18; Rev. 20:1). Their main purpose seems to be offering continuous praise to God. (Rev. 19:1-3).

"Round about the throne and the beasts (living creatures) and the elders": This speaks of a circle area beyond these from the throne. It shows us that redeemed mankind is placed closer to Him than angels.

"Number of them": The language indicates a countless number. Jude 14 indicates the Bride will have a large number when Jesus comes back to judge the earth. Dan. 7:10; Psa. 68:17; Deut. 23:2; I Kings 22:19

V12. "Loud voice": This is indicating the intensity of this praise.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain": This denotes the fact that He was slain as the sacrifice of sin making this praise just.

"Receive": His role, now and into Eternity, will be that which is right.

"Power": The authority to rule over all things. Mat. 28:18 "All power is given to Him in Heaven and earth."

"Riches": Meaning abundance. The idea here is His worthiness of whatever will contribute to His honor to be regarded as His. Jn. 1:16 "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Eph. 3:8:

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the ‘unsearchable’ riches of Christ”. James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Acts 17:25 “Neither is worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth all life, and breath, and all things.”

“Wisdom”: The truth of which is in the work He has done. I Cor. 1:20,21,24,30; Mat. 13:54; Luke 2:40,52; Eph. 1:8, 3:10.

“Strength”: The ability to accomplish His purpose in triumphing over death, in saving His people.

“Honor”: He is to be esteemed for what He has done.

“Glory”: This is a praise that is higher than normal from a full heart.

“Blessing”: This is the state of Him being everywhere loved and adored.

V13. “And every creature”: All animals, fish, all created things unite in rendering honor.

V14. “Amen”: Let it be established as truth.

“Fell down”: This worship began with them and they give the final response here. The whole of universe is in profound adoration, waiting for the opening of the book.

Knowledge of the future is with God

It is impossible for man or angel to know the future. We are able to have memory of past things but no foresight of the future. All we hope and all we fear are in front of us. The power of the future is shown to be in the hands of the Redeemer. Angels and mankind have the one and same creator and may unite in the same expression of praise.

The God of order has told us the plan of opening the final book of prophecy. II Pet. 1:20 "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." All prophecy is part of a system, a program of God which must be "rightly divided".