

Rev. 5:1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

God the Father is holding in His right hand a book/scroll written on both sides and sealed with seven seals.

I've been taught that this is a legal document that represents the title deed to planet earth, and it makes sense to me. Being able to break the seal is a sign of ownership. It is presented in terms as to be understood by the recipients of the revelation message according to their own laws and customs. I think there is also a connection with the teaching of the kinsman-redeemer as presented in the book of Ruth. Jesus is obviously the only kinsman-redeemer qualified to redeem His creation from the curse of sin. It is obvious that the book is an important document that represents ownership, power and authority since it is being delivered from the right hand of the Father.

Isaiah 62:8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength...

I found a wonderful explanation by Jon Courson:

“Initially, a title deed would be written only on the smooth side and sealed with a single seal (Jeremiah 32:6-29). But if the owner became unable to meet his financial obligations, he would have to relinquish his title deed – upon the backside of which would be written his debts and upon which would be placed seven seals. If at any time during the ensuing seven years he could pay off his debts, the seals would be broken, and the title deed returned.

All of this explains what is in the hand of the One Who sits on the throne here in Chapter 5: It's the title deed to Planet Earth. The title deed to this planet was originally given to Adam in the Garden of Eden when God told him to subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28). Adam forfeited his right to ownership when he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You see, although Satan tricked Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, Adam's was an overt, calculated act of rebellion, which is why the Bible speaks of Adam's sin as that which transferred to Satan the title deed of planet earth (Romans 5:14, 1Timothy 2:14).”

Romans 5:14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

1Timothy 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Warren Wiersbe made a different comparison: "The Roman will was sealed with 7 seals. The scroll gives Christ the right to claim creation by virtue of His death. A will can only be opened by the heir. Christ is the 'heir of all things.'"

***Hebrews 1:1-2** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds....*

Rev. 5:2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

Rev. 5:3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

Rev. 5:4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

Rev. 5:5 And 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.

Next John sees a strong angel asking a question in a loud voice, "Who is worthy (deserving) to open the book, and to loose the seals?" Point is made that no one was immediately found in earth or heaven that qualified. John begins to weep openly because he understood the consequences of that fact; he knew that the eternal future of believers and the fulfillment of God's covenants with Abraham and David were in jeopardy. One of the elders then speaks up and tells John not to weep because "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

I think this is a good point to give credit to the excellent ideas presented by Peter Goodgame in some articles at www.redmoonrising.com in helping to clarify my thinking in dealing with some of the pieces of the prophetic puzzle that just didn't seem to fit. One of the problems was that I had boxed myself in by referencing the tribulation, the seven-year period known as Daniel's 70th week, as interchangeable with "the day of the Lord," the time when God pours out His wrath on His enemies on planet earth. The 70th week is directed toward Israel; God's wrath is directed to the enemies of God. The 70th week is a refining fire meant to produce a purified remnant of Israel who will turn to Jesus as their Messiah. The time of God's wrath is an exercise of His vengeance against His enemies and those who have persecuted His family. Obviously the events recorded will be used to accomplish both objectives since they run

basically concurrent to one another. One fire can have multiple uses—to provide warmth, to prepare food, to burn garbage, etc.

In **1Thessalonians 4:17** Paul tells us that when the church is raptured, we will “ever be with the Lord.” If John or the 24 elders represent the church, Jesus would be there; they wouldn’t have had to search the universe for Him.

This seems to indicate that John’s arrival in heaven at the beginning of chapter 4 pictures the time just prior to Jesus’ ascension to the right hand of His Father. Although Jesus had already ascended to heaven at the time of John’s revelation, it makes sense that He would lay the foundation from which future events would proceed. These prophecies would never have been possible without the victorious risen Savior qualifying to take the scroll (cf verse 9 below). This narrative is similar to what was shown John in chapter 12 regarding the birth of Jesus and Satan’s attempt to destroy Him that gives the reader some history behind the “beasts” to be introduced in chapter 13.

Rev. 5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Rev. 5:7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

When John looks up, he sees standing in the midst of the thrones and elders “a Lamb as it had been slain” that is identified as possessing the seven Spirits of God. This is obviously the risen Lord returning to heaven victorious over the grave and worthy to take the scroll and loose the seals. John is allowed to witness the Lord’s glorious return to heaven as the risen Savior and King of kings before He takes His seat at the right hand of the Father to await the time designated to establish His earthly kingdom as determined before the foundation of the earth according to God’s plan. This isn’t the first time that John has referenced Jesus as a lamb (in the words of John the Baptist).

John 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.*

Jesus was not qualified to take the scroll until He had endured the cross and emerged victorious from the grave. (cf verse 9 below) The statement is made that the Lamb took the book from Him that sat on the throne, God the Father. He would never have presumed to take the book without being certain of His right to do so. Interesting to me

is the interaction being observed between Father and Son—two separate beings, yet one.

I was reminded of the possible connection to these verses from Daniel.

Daniel 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."

I think it is important to note that there is no time reference made regarding Jesus taking the scroll and when He begins to open it. Scripture is clear that the reckoning of time in heaven is far different from time on earth.

2Peter 3:8 *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

In fact, the record describes an intervening time of heavenly praise and worship for the Lamb, our Savior. In heavenly time He has only been there a couple of days.

I found a quote for which I sadly forgot to make note of the author—"Lions conquer; lambs submit. Lions roar; lambs die. There is introduced here one who conquers by submitting."

I believe as we continue into the next few chapters, it will become clear that Jesus, the Son of Man, God in flesh, is reclaiming man's authority over planet earth and that the scroll represents His right to do so.

Henry Morris made an interesting observation on this section: "It is in His capacity as the Lamb of God that the price of redemption had been satisfied. Therefore it is as the Lamb that He must receive the title scroll from the hand of Him who had held it in safekeeping...."

The Lamb had 7 horns and 7 eyes representing the Holy Spirit of God that has been sent to serve Him among the peoples of the earth. The Spirit is the One who goes alongside us to draw us to the Savior and convict us of sin and teach us regarding truth and wisdom. I think the horns are indicative of His power and authority and the eyes are indicative of His omniscience. I have always been taught that 7 is the number of perfection or completion. This would indicate that He has all power and all knowledge.

These seven eyes are also talked about in Zechariah:

Zechariah 4:10 *For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.*

There also seems to be a connection to 2 Chronicles:

2Chronicles 16:9 *For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.*

Rev. 5:8 **And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.**

When the Lamb took possession of the book, the four beasts and 24 elders fell down before the Lamb, a position of worship and reverence. Each of them had harps and held golden vials full of “incense.” This incense is identified as the prayers of the saints (8:4). Our communion time with God in prayer is pleasing to Him. It would seem that the more we pray the more incense will be available to offer before the throne.

It is interesting to note that this makes more connection with the 24 divisions of the priesthood. They have harps—some in the priesthood were specifically designated to serve as singers and musicians. Holding the vials of the prayers of the saints seems to symbolically place them in the role of intercessors.

Rev. 5:9 **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;**

Rev. 5:10 **And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.**

Again, I had let previous teaching cloud my understanding. “They” in verse 9 refers back to the compound subject “the four beasts and 24 elders” of verse 8. They sang the song recorded in verses 9-10. The words of the song are in dispute according to the translation you choose to accept. I base all of my studies on the King James translation of the scripture; but when I look at the original Hebrew or Greek, I sometimes think that the translators could have chosen a better word considering the context. Considering the scriptural foundation established previously and the most logical reading of the

context, I believe the NIV (supported by several other translations) gives a better translation in this instance.

Revelation 5:9–10 “And 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 for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

The expanded Greek translation of Kenneth Wuest, noted New Testament Greek scholar from Moody Bible Institute, also supported the NIV with the following translation: “you are worthy...you redeemed to God through your blood [men] out of every tribe and language...and constituted them to our God...and they shall reign as kings on the earth.”

If this translation is correct, it would support the idea of the elders being composed of a special group of angels or “watchers” as referenced in Daniel.

***Daniel 4:17** This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.*

My daughter pointed out that the song is being sung by the four beasts and the 24 elders. This again supports the NIV translation since the four beasts were not redeemed by the blood of Jesus.

As redeemed saints we have been given a position before God as kings and priests: and we shall reign on earth.

***1Peter 2:9** But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.*

***Revelation 1:6** And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father...*

A king has authority and power. As rulers on this earth, God will give us authority and power to influence the lives of others in a positive way, according to His will. A priest has the privilege of intimate communion and service before God. Our position as priest grants us personal access to God and the privilege of interceding for ourselves and others. New Testament saints aren't the only ones promised a position as priests of the Lord. Isaiah prophesied the same for the people of Israel.

Isaiah 61:6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

Jerusalem is also promised a position of royalty before the nations; this would also include its inhabitants, the Jews, as distinct from the Gentiles.

Isaiah 62:2-3 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

“we they shall reign” - This is a declaration that all the saints will reign with Jesus on earth. This is definitely indicative of a time future to the events in progress in John’s vision. I believe this references the millennium, but I think it continues on past that to the new heaven and new earth. This is another indication of “world without end” (**Ephesians 3:21**) even if it is a “new heaven and a new earth” (**Revelation 21:1**). I’ve often heard people question what we will do in eternity. I am sure that God has a perfect plan prepared for us just as He had prepared for Adam and Eve. The difference is that we won’t have to worry about sin entering the picture again.

Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The word “new” in the quote from Revelation 21 is defined as “new (especially in freshness)” —in other words, “renewed.”

I liked David Guzik’s summary of this song. It honors:

- The price of redemption – *for you were slain*
- The worker of redemption – *you...have redeemed us*
- The destination of redemption – *have redeemed us to God*
- The payment of redemption – *by your blood*
- The scope of redemption – *every tribe and tongue and people and nation*
- The result of redemption – *we shall reign on the earth*

Rev. 5:11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

The chapter closes with all of the angels around the throne breaking out in praise and worship of the Lamb. It seems clear to me that this is a collective group of angelic

beings of all ranks; there seems to be no justification for adding humanity to the mix. That will change in chapter 7.

This verse says that John saw and heard so many angels that he couldn't come up with a number big enough to express his thought; so he expressed it the best way that he could: 10,000 x 10,000 + 1,000's of 1,000's---and this is after having lost 1/3 who chose to follow Lucifer/Satan (cf Rev. 12:4). It also indicates the great number of followers Satan has at his behest as well. He can't be everywhere at the same time like God can, but he can sure blanket the earth with his forces of evil.

The numbers given to John were also given to Daniel:

***Daniel 7:10** A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.*

“ten thousand” = myriad or indefinite number

“thousand” – from a root word that is plural, of uncertain affinity or connection with a specific number

Rev. 5:12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Rev. 5:13 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, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Praise is being given to the Lamb who was slain because of His obedience to the Father and His willingness to die for my sin. He is Worthy and deserving to receive the following blessings:

- 1) power (miraculous power, might, strength),
- 2) riches (wealth, abundance),
- 3) wisdom (discernment)
- 4) strength (might strength),
- 5) honour (considered of great value, the highest esteem/ respect),
- 6) glory (deserving of worship and praise), and
- 7) blessing (praise with adoring words).

The first thing that comes to my mind is that He already possesses all the attributes listed. I guess the emphasis is on His worthiness in contrast to how His creation has treated Him.

The next verse makes it clear that *every* creature—in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, or in the sea—will confess aloud His worthiness. This truth is supported in Paul’s letter to the Philippians:

Philippians 2:9-11 *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

John actually witnesses this mighty chorus of praise in his visit to heaven. This seems to place this revelation of events in the heavenlies in the same category as that of the prophecies given to the Old Testament prophets—viewing prophecy from mountain peaks with valleys of time in between. I can’t imagine that this universal chorus of acknowledgement and worship will happen until Jesus rules on earth. Not only will these masses be praising and worshipping the Lamb, they will also be worshipping and praising God the Father.

Rev. 5:14 **And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.**

The four beasts provide the exclamation point and benediction—Amen (this is the truth). Once again John sees the 24 elders fall down and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever. The pronoun “him” is singular, which is appropriate since He is One God in three persons, the source of eternal life.