

REVELATION
CHAPTER FIVE
The Scroll and the Lamb
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- I. **Revelation 5:1 (NASB)** *I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book (HCSB → scroll) written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals.*
- A. “Him”
1. God the Father
- B. “book”
1. options as to what is contained in this little scroll
 - *a. a will bequeathing the inheritance of the New Covenant to the New Israel, the church
 - b. the Lamb’s book of life (Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12,15; 21:27)
 - c. the Old Testament
 - d. the book of Revelation
- C. “inside and on the back”
1. reference to the Ten Commandments
 - a. which were written on the front and back of the tablets
 - i. **Exodus 32:15** “¹⁵ And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written.”
 2. reference to Ezekiel’s scroll of judgments against Israel
 - a. **Ezekiel 2:8-10** “⁸ But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. ⁹ And when I looked, behold, an hand *was* sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book *was* therein; ¹⁰ And he spread it before me; and it *was* written within and without: [NASB on the front and the back] and *there was* written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.”
 3. the law and Ezekiel’s scroll represent the old covenant (judgment)
 - a. the scroll represents the new covenant
 - i. judgment on the church’s enemies
 - ii. salvation for the church
- D. “seven seals”
1. this means that the “biblion” (book) was a will (testament) (wills had 7 seals)
 - a. the will was for the disposition of a kingdom
 - b. the testator who died was Jesus
 - i. Jesus’ will was the new covenant
A/ **Hebrews 9:16-17 (CSBBible)** ¹⁶ Where a will exists, the death of the one who made it must be established. ¹⁷ For a will is valid only when people die, since it is never in effect while the one who made it is living.
 - c. the will will be unsealed, read aloud, & executed

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2. each seal was like the witness of a modern will (Gore)
 - a. to probate the will
 - i. each witness would come before the judge, identify his seal, and break it
 - b. Jesus is the perfect witness of his own will (DT)
 - i. he can testify that the will, signifying the inheritance, is valid (DT)
 - ii. he is the only one who can witness his own will (DT)
 - A/ he is the only one to rise from the dead to glory (DT)

II. **Revelation 5:2 (NASB)** *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?”*

A. “worthy”

1. only Jesus is qualified to open the book, establish the new covenant
 - a. Adam, Moses, David, no one else able

B. “open”

1. makes the symbolism of Jesus as testator off (DT)
 - a. because a testator doesn’t open his own will
 - b. but Jesus is unique, most testators don’t rise from the dead

C. “book”

1. contains 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls
2. the book (scroll) is the NEW COVENANT
 - a. some say the book is Revelation itself
 - i. but what is the book of Revelation, but a book about the establishment of the new covenant?

III. **Revelation 5:3-4 (NASB)** *And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. (v4) Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it;*

A. “heaven”

1. going from high to low, all creation is included
 - a. heaven, earth, under the earth

B. “weep”

1. query: how did John know about all the judgements coming?
 - a. answer: John not weeping for the judgments to come
 - i. he’s weeping because the NC Kingdom can’t get established
 - a. John looking at it from Old Covenant viewpoint

IV. **Revelation 5:5 (NASB)** *and one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”*

A. “elders”

1. one of the 24 elders around the throne
 - a. representing the people of God, old and new covenant
 - b. wearing white, and wearing a crown

B. “Lion”

1. fulfillment of **Genesis 49:9-10**

- a. ⁹ 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? ¹⁰ The sceptre 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*.”
 - i. “Shiloh” is “the peaceful one,” a name for the Messiah

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C. “Root”

1. strange
 - a. Isaiah called him a “shoot”
 - i. **Isaiah 11:1 (CSBBible)** Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.
A/ earthly view
 - b. answer
 - i. Jesus is the center of all history
A/ the cause of David
B/ heavenly view
1/ where John is

D. “overcome”

1. what did Jesus have to overcome
 - a. crucifixion and death by rising from the dead
 - b. two persecuting governments, Rome and apostate Israel
 - i. which is one of the two major themes of the book of Revelation

V. **Revelation 5:6 (NASB)** *And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.*

A. “Lamb”

1. metaphor does not apply to his PERSONALITY
 - a. not meant to say that He is gentle, meek, mild
 - b. rather, refers to his WORK
 - i. sacrifice to take away the sins of the world
A/ cf. “slain” (5:6)
2. John is only NT writer to use the word “lamb” (Gore)
 - a. he used “lamb” in Revelation and John’s gospel
 - i. which helps establish that the same author wrote both
3. in order to be the Lion, he first had to be the lamb (Gore)

B. “standing”

1. query: how can a slain lamb be standing?
 - a. DLT: because even though he’s slain, he still lives
 - i. perhaps he was bleeding, and yet standing anyway

C. “seven”

1. the typical symbol for divine perfection
 - a. seven horns → omnipotence (Gore)
 - b. seven eyes → omniscience (Gore)
 - c. seven spirits → omnipresence (Gore)
2. notice the attributes of Jesus are the attributes of God, because Jesus is God

D. “horns”

1. the typical symbol for strength
 - a. **Joshua 6:4-5 (CSBBible)** ⁴Have seven priests carry seven ram's-horn trumpets in front of the ark. But on the seventh day, march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the trumpets. ⁵When there is a prolonged blast of the horn and you hear its sound, have all the troops give a mighty shout. Then the city wall will collapse, and the troops will advance, each man straight ahead.”
 - i. blowing down a wall took some strength

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E. “seven eyes”

1. Jesus is omniscient
 - a. he sees with divine perfection (note the “seven”)
 - b. 7 churches needed to hear that (Gore)
 - i. they needed an omniscient God to deliver them
2. He sees via the Holy Spirit
 - a. the seven eyes are the seven Spirits (Holy Spirit) of God
3. **Zechariah 4:8-10 (CSBBible)** ⁸ Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁹ "Zerubbabel's hands have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of Armies has sent me to you. ¹⁰ For who despises the day of small things? These seven eyes of the Lord, which scan throughout the whole earth, will rejoice when they see the ceremonial stone in Zerubbabel's hand."

F. “sent out into all the earth”

1. the gospel to spread all over the world
2. note the new Jerusalem has all its gates open to the world
 - a. **Revelation 21:25 (KJV)** And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

VI. **Revelation 5:7 (NASB)** *And He came and took the book (HCSB → scroll) out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*

A. “came”

1. p’y a reference to Dan 7:13-14
 - a. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ 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.”
 - b. the meaning would be the same
 - i. Jesus is inheriting a kingdom (the new covenant kingdom)

B. “right”

1. the position of authority next to a king

C. “book”

1. represents Jesus’ New Covenant Kingdom

VII. **Revelation 5:8 (NASB)** *When He [Jesus] had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*

A. “one”

1. probably, each elder [DLT]
 - a. because they represent the people of God, who naturally pray to God (DT)
 - i. the creation (four living creatures) don’t pray to God (DT)

B. “incense”

1. typical symbol of prayers to God
 - a. **Psalm 141:2** “² Let my prayer be set forth before thee *as* incense; *and* the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.”
 - b. **Luke 1:10** “¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.”

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2. incense burns up in smoke
 - a. so the smoke is the refined essence of the offering
 - i. our prayers are the very essence of our being
 - b. smoke ascends
 - i. as prayers do
 3. golden altar of incense is located next to curtain covering doorway to Holy of Holies
 - a. shows that prayer is near to the heart of God
 4. aroma of praise (Gore)
 - a. like the harps and new song are the sound of praise (Gore)
- C. “harp”
1. praise and prayer goes together

VIII. **Revelation 5:9 (NASB)** *And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men [Most manuscripts: “us”] from every tribe and tongue and people and nation*

A. “they”

1. 24 elders and four living creatures
 - a. but if it’s “us” and not “men,” its only the elders

B. “new song”

1. mentioned 7 times in OT, always in connection w/ *creative* and *redemptive* acts (Chilton)
 - a. in Revelation, God is getting ready to *do something* (DT)
 - i. getting ready to establish the new covenant church (DT)
A/ new covenant needs a new song (DT)
2. OT mentions of “new song”
 - a. **Psalm 33:3** “³ Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. “
 - i. cf 33:4 “all his works are done in truth.”
 - ii. cf 33:5 “Many, O LORD my God, *are thy wonderful works which thou hast done,*
 - b. **Psalm 40:3** “³ And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. “
 - c. **Psalm 96:1** “¹ O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. “
 - i. cf. v2 “Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.
 - d. **Psalm 144:9** “⁹ I will sing a new song unto thee, “
 - i. cf 144:10 “¹⁰ *It is he* that giveth salvation unto kings:
 - e. **Psalm 149:1** “¹ Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song,”
 - i. cf. **Psalm 149:2** “Let Israel rejoice in him that made him:
 - f. **Isaiah 42:10** “¹⁰ Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. “
 - i. cf. **Isaiah 42:9** “⁹ Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

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3. examples of “new” in the Scriptures
 - a. new song
 - b. new and living way
 - c. new creation
 - d. new Jerusalem
 - e. new covenant
 - f. new heavens and the new earth
 - g. new man
 - h. new birth
 - i. new name
 - j. new wine
- C. “purchased”
 1. at the crucifixion
 - a. this is the foundation of the new covenant
 - i. this is why the 24 elders are singing a new song
- D. “men”
 1. most every manuscript says “purchased US”
 - a. which would include the elders with the purchased
 - i. which would make them representatives of the church and not angels
 - b. English translations that use “us”
 - i. KJV, J.P. Green Literal, Young’s Literal
- E. “men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation”
 1. cf. language of Dan 7:14 “all people, nations, and languages, should serve him”
 - a. **Daniel 7:14 (KJV)** 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.

IX. **Revelation 5:10 (KJV)** And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

- A. “them”
 1. this verse is spoken by the 4 creatures (Chilton)
 - a. how are the 4 creatures made kings and priests? (!!!!!)
 - a. antiphonal praise
 - i. verse 9 was the 24 elders
 - ii. how do we know that? (DT)
 - iii. if KJV is right in translating as “us,” then it’s the *elders* singing, not the four creatures
- B. “kingdom, priests”
 1. an obvious reference to the church
 - a. **1 Peter 2:9** “⁹ But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation [kingdom], a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light”
 - i. if the church is a holy nation (kingdom) NOW...
A/ that means the church’s reign has begun NOW
- C. “reign”
 1. pretty good result for the tiny, persecuted church of John’s day

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D. “upon the earth”

1. and where will the church reign?

a. answer

i. “upon the earth”

A/ we are promised increasing victories, rule, and dominion on this earth

1/ “thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on [fill in the blank]”

B/ contrast amils

1/ who tend to say the victory is in HEAVEN

2. compare the OT typology

a. **Exodus 19:6a** “⁶ And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.

E. “reign”

1. to show that Christians reign begins NOW, as does Jesus’s reign

a. Scriptures

i. **Revelation 3:21 (CSBBible)** ²¹ "To the one who conquers I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne

ii. **Ephesians 2:5-6 (ESV)** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus

X. **Revelation 5:11 (NASB)** *Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,*

A. “angels”

1. they fill out the heavenly choir when added to 4 creatures, 24 elders

XI. **Revelation 5:12 (NASB)** *saying with a loud voice, “worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”*

A. “worthy”

1. he was worthy to break the seals of the book of the new covenant (5:2)

2. answering the question of Revelation 5:2

a. **Revelation 5:2 (CSBBible)** I also saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? "

i. all of creation gives a thunderous answer

B. “riches”

1. and so is worthy to receive the riches of the new covenant

XII. **Revelation 5:13-14 (NASB)** *And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever. (v14) And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped.”*

A. “created thing”

1. now, the choir is filled out with earthly, non-angelic beings

B. “heaven, earth, under the earth, on the sea, and all things in them”

1. that covers every created thing

C. “and”

1. Jesus gets praise and Dominion as well as the Father

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D. “dominion”

1. the theme of the book
2. the goal of history
3. the ragtag, compromised, weak 7 churches needed to know the church was triumphant

XIII. Application

A. The American church is going to reign in the midst of persecution

1. We are not going to be hunkered down waiting for the “Antichrist” to waste us
2. We are not going to be jerked out of the church in the midst of persecution