

Revelation 5

Introduction:

- I. The Seven Sealed Scroll – vs. 1
 - a. The Place of the Book
It is in the right hand of the Father on the throne. John 10:28
 - b. The Nature of the Book
 - i. Its Comprehensiveness – written on both sides
 - ii. Its Seven Seals
According to Roman law, a will was to be sealed seven times. The book John saw was like a scroll, sealed in such a way that the seals must be successively broken as the scroll is read. Cf. Rev 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12; 8:1.
 - c. The Identity of the Book.
The book is the title deed to the earth.

In the book of Leviticus, there was provision for redemption of three things: a wife, a slave and a possession. In the case of a wife, if her husband died before leaving offspring, in order that his name might not disappear from the earth the dead husband's brother was to take the widow as his wife (if he were able) and to perpetuate the name of his departed brother. In the case of a slave, if a man fell into debt and was legally tried and unable to pay, he was to serve his master to whom he owed this debt as a servant, but the law provided that after six years he could again go free. If in the meantime, however, a near of kin chose to redeem him and were able to meet the payment, he could release him before the six years ended.

The third redemption described is that of land which had been lost by its owner. Leviticus 25:23-25 "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold."

When a man lost his property or land, he was taken before the judges and a document was prepared which stated that the land had passed from the debtor into the possession of the one to whom he owed the debt. But this was not a permanent transfer. When the Year of Jubilee came, the land was to be returned to the original owner. In the meantime, however, it could be redeemed and returned to him. This could be done in two ways. Either the man himself could pay the redemption price, or it could be purchased back by a near relative, an uncle or a closer kin. The papers, therefore, were written on two scrolls of parchment. On both of these were written the terms of the redemption of the lost possession. One scroll was left open in the court of the Temple of Tabernacle for all to read, but the other was rolled up, sealed with seven seals and placed in the Temple to be brought out only when a kinsman redeemer gave evidence that he was willing and able to redeem it. As time passed

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the practice of using one scroll instead of two was adopted. One scroll or parchment was used, and the terms of redemption of the mortgage was written on both sides, within and without. When the scroll was rolled into a tube and sealed with the seven seals, the inside corresponded to the secret record and the outside containing the terms for the public.

Notice the need for the earth's redemption.

When God created the all that there is, he set man as king over it. Man was given dominion over the land, the animal kingdom, and the vegetable kingdom. When Adam fell he did not fall alone, but fell as the head of the entire terrestrial creation. Through his sin the curse fell upon all that which had been placed under him.

Genesis 3:17-18 "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field."

God then proceeds to curse the serpent, which pictured the head of the animal kingdom.

You see that Adam by his sin lost everything. He lost dominion over the earth. The soil, the vegetation and all the animals came under the curse and the sentence of death. Romans 8:22 "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

Christ came to redeem what Adam lost, and He is a perfect and complete Redeemer. He is the Second Man and the Last Adam, and He will bring deliverance to every realm that came under Adam's curse.

By the time of Revelation 5, the first of the three things mentioned in Leviticus that needed to be redeemed have been redeemed. Man who was servant to sin has been set free from its bondage. The bride of Christ has been caught up together with Him to ever be with the Lord. The promise has been given that saved man will reign with Christ, but what and where will he reign? Thus the need to redeem the kingdom which once belonged to man and is now in the power of the prince and power of the air.

- M. R. DeHaan, Revelation

II. The Searching and Sobbing Seer – vs. 2-4

a. The Great Question – vs. 2

b. The Sad Answer – vs. 3

No one was worthy to open and read this Book.

- i. In heaven – the dwelling place of God.
- ii. In earth – the dwelling place of man.
- iii. Under the earth – the underworld.

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- c. The Broken Heart of John – vs. 4
This scene sets before us the sinfulness of man. No man is worthy. John no doubt wept over this fact, and out of real concern for a Christ-less world.

III. The Slain Saviour – vs. 5-7

- a. The Title of the Saviour – vs. 5
 - i. The Lion of Judah – Genesis 49:9-12
 - ii. The Root of David – Isaiah 11:1, 10
Both of these speak to His Sovereignty. We see His Majesty (or Power) and His Lineage (or Legality).

- iii. The Slain Lamb – Isaiah 53:7; I Peter 1:19

This speaks of Him as our Saviour. Notice that the elder told John to behold a Lion, but John saw a Lamb. Jesus is both!

We are told in Leviticus that the redeemer of land must 1) be a near relative of the one who had lost the inheritance, 2) be willing to act as redeemer, and 3) be able to pay the price of redemption.

These titles bear witness that Christ fit all three requirements.

He is a near relative

Hebrews 2:16-17 “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

He was willing

John 10:17-18 “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

He is able

Hebrews 7:25 “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

- b. The Appearance of the Saviour – vs. 6
 - i. Slain – the marks of the cross are evident – Jn 20:25-27
 - ii. Seven Horns – speaks of authority – Dan 7:24; Zech 1:18-19; Deut 33:17
 - iii. Seven Eyes – the perfections of the Holy Spirit

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- c. The Position of the Saviour – vs. 6
In the midst of the throne of the Father – Heb 10:12-13
- d. The Actions of the Saviour
 - i. His Prevailing (conquer) – vs. 5
Jesus is the Sovereign – Heb 2:10
 - ii. His Purchasing – vs. 6
Christ is the Kinsman-Redeemer – Lev 25:23-43

Through His incarnation, Christ became a near relative (the Second Adam), and through His blood, purchased a lost humanity.

The earth is the Lord's by sovereign right (Ps 24:1), but also His by purchase (Eph 1:13-14; Romans 8:22-23).

- iii. His Power – vs. 7
The Lord does not meekly take the Book from the Hand of the Father – the verb 'too' in the Greek is a dramatic perfect, suggesting promptness and resolute finality.
The destiny of mankind is in the nail-pierced hands of the Lamb that was slain.

IV. The Saved Singers – 8-10

- a. The Worship of Jesus Christ – vs. 8
The four beasts – Seraphim
The 24 elders – representatives of the redeemed in heaven

Here is another proof of the deity of Christ, for He accepts worship. Rev 22:8-9; Matt 2:2, 11; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 28:9, 17; Jn 9:38; Acts 10:25-26; 14:11-15.

- b. The Harps – vs. 8
The harp is a musical instrument associated with worship. Ps 33:2; 43:4
- c. The Vial of Incense – vs. 8
This teaches us much about prayer:
 - i. Prayer reaches heaven – Hebrews 4:16
 - ii. Prayer pleases God – Psalm 141:2
 - iii. Prayer is 'stored' in heaven
 - iv. Prayer worships God.
- d. The Gospel in Song – vs. 9-10

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- i. The Explanation of the Gospel
“...thou wast slain...” (not ‘are’!) I Corinthians 15:3-4
 - ii. The Application of the Gospel
“...and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood...”
When the blood of Jesus Christ is applied, we are saved, redeemed.
I Cor 6:20; Rom 6:17-18; Jn 8:34-36
 - iii. The Contemplation of the Gospel
“...out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation...”
All are included in the scope of redemption. Jn 3:16
 - iv. The Elevation of the Gospel
In Christ we are made something special.
 - 1. Now – We are Priests unto God – I Peter 2:5,9
 - 2. Later – We shall Rule with Christ – Matt 19:28; Luke 22:28-29
- V. The Song of the Saved and the Servants – vs. 11-14
- a. The Title of the Song – “Worthy is the Lamb” – Rev 4:11; 5:9, 12
What a contrast to much of ‘Christian’ music today, which focuses on the ‘me’ aspect!
 - b. The Heavenly Choir – vs. 11
 - i. Many Angels
 - ii. The Redeemed
 - iii. The 4 beasts
 - iv. The whole creation – vs. 13

Note: The angels are not said to sing, but to speak. The last time angels ever sang was before the entrance of sin into the world. – Job 38:7.

Note: These scenes are to be anticipated. Phil 2:9-11
 - c. The Seven-Fold Doxology – vs. 12
 - i. Power – Matt 28:18; Col 1:16-17; Mark 4:41
 - ii. Riches – II Cor 8:9; I Tim 6:17; Ps 50:10; Hag 2:8
 - iii. Wisdom – I Cor 1:30; Jam 3:17; I Tim 1:7; Jude 25
 - iv. Strength – Ps 24:8
 - v. Honour – Ps 8:5; 104:1; I Sam 2:30
 - vi. Glory – John 1:14; 2:11; 11:4, 40; 17:5, 24
 - vii. Blessing – To ‘bless’ means to be ‘happy, pleased’. Ps 103:1-2
 - d. The Response to the Song – vs. 14
 - i. Amen – Agreement. Songs should agree with Scripture.
 - ii. Adoration – Ephesians 5:19-20