

Revelation Of Jesus Christ Study 28

Rev 5:1-14

¹ And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. ⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." ⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. ⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" 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, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" ¹⁴ Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Throughout history there have been many pretenders to earth's throne who have sought to conquer and rule the world.

The first and most powerful and notorious usurper was Satan.

After his rebellion against God was crushed, he and his angelic followers were thrown out of heaven

Luke 10:18; Rev. 12:3-4

¹⁸ And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven

³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. ⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth

And then he became the "God of this world"

2 Cor 4:3-4

³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them

He has inspired a host of humans to try their hand at conquest, men such as **Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Alexander the Great, the emperors of Rome, Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Lenin, Stalin and Hitler**. In the future will come the most powerful Satan-possessed human conqueror of all, the final **Antichrist**.

All of those men, and a host of lesser lights, have one thing in common: **they failed**:

Only one individual has the right, the power, and the authority to rule the earth: The Lord Jesus Christ.

He will one day take back what is rightfully His from Satan the usurper, and all the rebels, demonic and human.

No one else is worthy or capable of ruling the world... no evil man, no good man, no demon, and no holy angel.

Revelation 5 introduces Jesus Christ, earth's rightful ruler, who is pictured about to return to redeem the world from sin, Satan, and death, and the curse.

He is the central theme of John's second vision of heaven.

The events of *Chapter 5* occur right after those of *Chapter 4*.

The scene, as in *Chapter 4*, is the throne of God in heaven.

Present are the cherubim, the twenty-four elders (representing the glorified Church), and the Holy Spirit in His sevenfold glory (*4:5*).

The events in both chapters anticipate the holocaust of divine judgment about to be poured out on the sinful, rebellious, cursed earth (*chapt 6_19*).

Awestruck by the indescribable majesty of God's throne, and the flashes of lightning and peals of thunder that proceed from it, the cherubim and elders begin a series of hymns of praise to God.

Those Hymns celebrate God as creator and redeemer, and rejoice that He is about to take back what is rightfully His.

This is the moment that all Christians:

Eph 1:14

¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

And the entire creation longs for.

Rom 8:19-22

19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

As the moment approaches, God begins to stir.

Rev 5:2, 6, 11-12

2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"

6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"

the words "I saw" stresses John's status as an eyewitness.

Rev. 5:1

1 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals

God stretched out His hand, as it were, and in it He held a book. *Biblion* (book) does not refer to a book in the modern sense, but to a scroll;

Rev 6:14

14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

A scroll was a long piece of papyrus or animal skin, rolled from both ends into the middle.

Such scrolls were commonly used before the invention of the codex, or modern-style book, consisting of square pages bound together.

While Roman wills were **sealed up with seven seals**, this scroll is not a will but a deed or contract.

Dr Robert L. Thomas explains:

This kind of contract was known all over the Middle East in ancient times and was used by the Romans from the time of Nero on. The full contract would be written on the inner pages and sealed with seven seals.

Then the content of the contract would be described briefly on the outside. All kinds of transactions were consummated this way, including marriage-contracts, rental and lease agreements, release of slaves, contract-bills, and bonds.

Support also comes from Hebrew practices. The Hebrew document most closely resembling this scroll was a title deed that was folded and signed, requiring at least three witnesses. A portion of text would be written, folded over and sealed, with a different witness signing at each fold. A larger number of witnesses meant that more importance was assigned to the document. (Revelation 1-7: An exegetical Commentary[Chicago: Moody, 1992], 378)

Jeremiah 32 provides a good illustration of the use of such a document.

In the waning days of the southern kingdom, shortly before the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah's cousin Hanamel approached him. Hanamel was desperate to sell a field he owned in Jeremiah's hometown of Anathoth, not far from Jerusalem.

Hanamel knew that once the Babylonian army conquered (actually, the Babylonians may have already occupied the land in question: he would lose his plot of ground.

Jer 32:2, 24-25

2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house

24 Look, the siege mounds! They have come to the city to take it; and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who fight against it, because of the sword and famine and pestilence. What You have spoken has happened; there You see it! 25 And You have said to me, O Lord GOD, "Buy the field for money, and take witnesses!"--yet the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.' "

Jeremiah in obedience to God's command;

Jer 32:6-7

6 And Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 7 'Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you, saying, "Buy my field which is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is yours to buy it."

9 So I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle who was in Anathoth, and weighed out to him the money--seventeen shekels of silver. 10 And I signed the deed and sealed it, took witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales. 11 So I took the purchase deed, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open; 12 and I gave the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the purchase deed, before all the Jews who sat in the court of the prison. 13 "Then I charged Baruch before them, saying, 14 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Take these deeds, both this purchase deed which is sealed and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last many days." 15 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land." ' "

This was to show as a sign that the Babylonian captivity would not be permanent.

The scroll that John saw in God's hand is the title deed to the earth, which He will give to Christ.

Unlike other such deeds, however, it does not record the descriptive detail of what Christ will inherit, but rather how He will regain His rightful inheritance.

He will do so by the divine judgments about to be poured out on the earth. (6:1)

While the scroll is a scroll of doom and judgment, it is also a scroll of redemption. It tells how Christ will redeem the world from the usurper, Satan,, and those men and demons who have collaborated with him.

Ezekiel describes this same scroll in his vision of heaven:

Ezek 2:9-10

9 Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it.

10 Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe.

Now this chapter divides naturally into three sections:

The search for the worthy one

 The selection of the worthy one

 The song of the worthy one.

Next week we will take the first of the sections.