

[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**.

[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?

[3] And no man in heaven, nor in **earth**, neither under the **earth**, was able to **open** the **book**, neither **to look** thereon.

[4] And I wept much, because no man was found **worthy to open** and to read the **book**, neither **to look** thereon.

[5] And one of the **elders** sai[d] unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, ha[s] prevailed **to open** the **book**, and **to loose** the **seven seals** thereof.

[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**.

[7] And he came and took the **book** out of the right hand of him that sat upon the **throne**.

[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.

[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;

[10] And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign [over] the **earth**.

[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;

[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.

[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 sit[s] upon the **throne**, and unto the **Lamb** for ever and ever.

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

Did you notice any repeated keywords?

8 book
6 earth
5 throne
5 seven
5 elders
4 worthy
4 seals
4 lamb
4 beasts

With that, let's go back and take a closer look at what this passage has to say.

[1] And

Notice this conjunction connects chapter 4 with chapter 5. As we shall see the setting remains the same:

1. God the Father.
2. His throne.
3. His four cherubim symbolizing His creatures.
4. The twenty-four elders representing the saints betrothed to Jesus.

I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne

Who sat on the throne? God the Father. That becomes very clear as we proceed.

a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

Is this book like what we know as a book? No it is **not** something with a cover, pages, and a binding which is technically called a *codex*. It is instead a scroll. The Greek word is *be-ble'-on* which should ring a bell with our word *bible*. The word actually means a small book, page, or scroll. Since neither a book nor page fits with being sealed with seven seals, we can confidently conclude this book is actually a scroll.

The contents and purpose of this scroll is not revealed in the narrative. Most dispensationalists posit that this scroll is the title deed to the earth. The book of Revelation makes no such claim. The most common recognized usage for a seven-sealed scroll at that time was for Roman legal documents – especially wills and testaments.

While it's tempting to lean on the analogy that Christ is our Kinsman Redeemer here, we cannot make that leap from the text with respect to the title deed of the earth. Instead, the scripture to come tells us that the scroll reveals progressively more terrible judgments that lead to catastrophe but ultimately to a new heaven and new earth. In three classic stories of scripture we see similar patterns of redemption from calamity play out:

1. Noah and his family were redeemed from the worldwide flood.
2. The Israelites were redeemed from bondage in Egypt after ten plagues.
3. Mankind was redeemed by Christ after His death on the cross.

*[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?*

*[3] And **no man** in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.*

The words translated *no man* here actually means *none or no one*.
[4] *And I wept much,*

Why?

*because no man was found **worthy** to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*

Perhaps John realized the scroll must be opened in order for God to fulfill His promised plan to **overcome the curse** that holds His creation captive.

[5] *And one of the **elders** sai[d] unto me,*

Recall the twenty-four elders sat before the throne of God representing those who believed in Christ and are betrothed to Him that is, Christians.

*Weep not: **behold**, the **Lion** of the tribe of Juda,*

Recall when Jacob blessed his twelve sons and Judah in particular on his deathbed.

Genesis 49

[8] *Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise:*

Other Jews will look up to him.

thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies;

He will be strong in battle.

thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

The Messiah will descend from Judah.

[9] *Judah is a **lion's whelp**: ... and as an old lion ...?*

There's that reference to a lion.

[10] *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
nor a lawgiver from between his feet,*

He shall reign.

until Shiloh come;

Shiloh means tranquility.

Jesus was called the prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6) and some day He will bring peace to all the earth.

and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Jerusalem (Zion) and the temple was located in the land of Judah. The Jews were charged to observe feasts there multiple time each year.

the Root of David,

This clearly identifies Jesus (Revelation 22:16).

*hath **prevailed** to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

The word translated *prevailed* here is the same word translated *overcame* in Revelation 3:21 where we learned that Jesus **overcame the curse** of this fallen world. The Greek word *ne-kä'-o* you may recognize became the sportswear company name *Nike*. He **defeated the curse** at the cross and **overcame death** as He rose from the dead (I Corinthians 15:20).

[6] And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts,

Recall these four beasts were cherubim who represented the creatures God had made.

and in the midst of the elders,

The twenty-four elders sat before the throne. This scene is very much the same as chapter 4 except:

stood a Lamb as it had been slain,

Notice here a big change. The issue was finding someone, anyone who could take the scroll and open the seals. No man could be found until Jesus Christ Himself appeared, not with a frightening appearance, but as a humble lamb before God the Father and in the midst of these worshiping Him before His throne. The verse notes that His wounds will be clearly visible. That incontrovertible evidence proved that Jesus Christ paid the penalty for the sins of the world. The previous verse linked with this one gives a composite image of Christ as both **ruler** and **redeemer**.

This first reference to *Lamb* in the book of Revelation appears 28 more times. All but one refers to Jesus Christ. The other (Revelation 13:11) refers to an impostor called the False Prophet.

having seven horns

Seven horns denotes complete authority. He will not have seven literal horns protruding from His head.

and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Seven eyes denotes the fullness of the Holy Spirit. He will not have seven literal eyes distributed on his head.

[7] *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.*

Jesus, the Lamb and Lion, and the only one worthy to take the scroll, took the scroll from God the Father. This verse clearly shows us that God the Father is seated on the throne.

[8] *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb,*

What a joyous, wonderful event this is!

having every one of them harps,

Notice it's not angels with harps, but the representatives for saints.

and golden vials full of odours,

This word refers to aromatic fragrance or incense.

which are the prayers of saints.

Did you ever feel like your prayers were not heard? We see them here preserved in golden vials as something precious to be savored.

[9] *And they sung a new song, saying,*

Will there be singing in heaven? Yes.

*Thou art **worthy** to take the book, and to open the seals thereof:*

Why? What makes Him worthy?

for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God

The word for *redeemed* ä-go-rä'-zo sounds like agora or marketplace and means *purchased*.

How? What cost did He pay?

by thy blood

And what did He buy?

out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

These elders represent the redeemed saints of Christ from all over the earth. .

*[10] And hast made us unto our God kings and priests:
and we shall reign [over] the earth.*

Jesus will lift us to the heights as together with Him we execute His will.

*[11] And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts
and the elders:*

The scene now widens to include many angels surrounding the throne, God, Jesus, the four creatures and the twenty-four elders. And how many angels are there?

and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

10,000 x 10,000 = 100 million
plus 1000s x 1000s = millions more

[12] Saying with a loud voice,

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive

A sevenfold series of praise comes from the millions and millions of angels the cherubim and the twenty-four elders:

*power,
and riches,
and wisdom,
and strength,
and honour,
and glory,
and blessing.*

But that's not all. In an ever-widening crescendo, the chorus grows ever greater.

*[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,

We've seen a few examples of creatures other than men speaking:

1. The serpent in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-5).
2. Balaam's donkey (Numbers 22:28, 30).

But we've never seen anything close to this.

*Blessing,
and honour,
and glory,
and power,*

*be unto him that sitteth upon the throne,
God the Father.*

and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Jesus Christ the Redeemer and Overcomer.

[14] And the four beasts said, Amen.

Recall the four animals said that universal word in all languages attesting to the truth.

And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Here the twenty-four elders again fall down and worship God before they reach their ultimate status of being fully joined to their Bridegroom Jesus Christ.

Application

We have a wonderful Savior. We see here, He will step up and show the immutable, irrefutable evidence that He has redeemed all who accept His free gift of grace. We can have no greater advocate.

Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen (Revelation 22:21).

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