

Study Notes – Revelation 5

A Scroll with Seven Seals

Revelation 5:1 ¹And I saw in the right hand of the One seated upon the throne a scroll, written on both the front and the back, sealed with seven seals.

- ✓ right hand – The side of favor & strength.
 - This is the side that Yeshua is seated awaiting His kingdom. Ps 110:1, Dan 7:13-14, Mark 16:19
 - “with his Father on His throne” Rev3:21
 - The reclamation of the earth is about to begin.
- ✓ a scroll – it is:
 - A catalog of Judgements: 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls
 - Prophetic Revelation: As the seals are opened events unfold which fulfill prophecy found elsewhere in the Bible spoken through the Prophets.
 - A Testament: Only the Lamb who was slain can open it. Heb 9:15-17, Jer 31:31-37, Rom 11:26-27
 - A Deed of Purchase: By opening the scroll the Lamb takes as His inheritance that which He has already purchased (an everlasting kingdom & Title Deed to the earth. Ps 2:6-8).

Note: Land Redemption in the Old Testament; **Satan’s domain is about to end!**

- ✓ written on both the front and the back –
 - Legal documents are written on both sides. Jer 32:10 & 12
 - Deeds of Purchase in Israel’s land redemption system indicate it is a deed of purchase.
 - Extensive nature of impending judgement.
 - Nothing more needs to be written on it.
- ✓ Sealed – katesphragismenon (grk): having been sealed.
 - Title Deeds are sealed to protect their contents from being tampered with until the time the Title is claimed. Jeremiah’s sealed this way. Jer 32:10-14
- ✓ seven seals – 7 is perfection, completeness.
 - All judgements to be poured out upon the earth and the earth dwellers (Rev 3:10) as part of the redemption of creation and the Lamb taking dominion over the earth.
 - Dan 2:44-45, King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of a statue representing nations and the “stone” – Yeshua.

Note: **Throughout Revelation there are groups: people, individuals, angels, groups of Angles..** Make lists to gain understanding. Start with God & Yeshua.

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

- ✓ mighty angel – ischus (grk): might, strength, power in action as used by God.
 - He is strong
 - He is God’s messenger
 - He is declaring/shouting a challenge for anyone to come to forth who is worthy to break seals and open the scroll.
 - Who is worthy? John waits; as echoes of the strong angel’s voice recede, there is only silence.

5.3 ³No one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it.

- ✓ All creation in heaven & earth and under the earth wait..
- ✓ The powerful Archangels: Michael & Gabriel do not answer.
- ✓ Uncounted thousands of Angels are silent.
- ✓ All the righteous dead of all ages: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul, Peter and the other Apostles and all the Saints from the church age are silent..
- ✓ Who is worthy?

5.4 ⁴I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

- ✓ Weep – eklaion (grk): wailing, expressing great grief & mourning loudly.
- ✓ John understood the significance of the scroll and the great need to open it to read it's contents. He knew that if no one was found worthy to take it from the hand of God, breaking it's seals, that all the promises of the Prophet, the redeeming of the earth & Israel's salvation must fail.

5.5 ⁵Then one of the elders tells me, "Stop weeping! Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed—He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals."

- ✓ the Lion of the tribe of Judah –
 - God revealed that the ruler would be like a lion, an offspring of Judah (Gen 49:9-10). The ruler's staff will not depart from Judah (Ps 60:9).
 - Yeshua is born in the line of Judah. Matt 1:2-3, Luke 3:33, Heb 7:14 Genealogy: Matt 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38
 - It was a promise to Abraham, Isaac & Jacob that someday one of their descendants, also a descendant of David, would sit upon the throne.
 - The genealogic records of the Tribes of Israel were lost in the destruction of the Temple in 70ad. Within a few generations all the Tribes of Israel, with the exception of Levi, lost their identity. Immediately after 70 ad, the Rabbis passed laws which would preserve the identity of the priestly tribe of Levi. So Messiah had to come before 70ad in order for the prophecy of His Tribe of Judah to be significant for humans and does pose a problem for Judaism which having rejected Yeshua still await the Messiah.
 - Messianic Prophecy – 2nd coming. Rev 19:11-16
 - Lion represent power, fierceness & majesty. Reveals His deity. The Lion triumphs because He became a Lamb. John 1:29
- ✓ the Root of David – shoot, offspring (progenitor of family) of Jesse (father of King David). Rod of the stem of Jesse. Ruth 4:22
 - Prophecy from Isaiah 11: 1 & 10 about the Messiah Yeshua. He is the root of David's Kingly power. God promised David a remnant would remain. Acts 13:22-23, Rom 15:8-13, Rev 22:16
 - Sheres (heb): implies a root that remains alive and sends up a shoot or branch after it has been cut down and appears to be dead. Jer 23:5-6
 - "Son of David" 2 Sam 7:12-16, Matt 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30-31, 21:9&15, 22:42
 - Yeshua is the fulfillment of the "Davidic Covenant". Ps 89:33-37
 - The Throne of David will be upon the earth when the Lion of Judah has completed His work. Rev 20:4-6
 - From the descendants of David God has brought to Israel the Messiah Yeshua as He promised. Acts 13:22-23

5.5 ⁵Then one of the elders tells me, "Stop weeping! Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed—He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals."

- ✓ Triumphed – prevailed, overcomer
 - Yeshua has overcome the world. John 16:33
 - At the cross He defeated sin (Rom 8:3), death (Heb 2:14-15) and all the forces of hell. Col 2:15
 - Believers are Overcomers through His overcoming. Col 2:13-14, I John 5:5
 - Having triumphed, the Lamb qualifies as the promised Shiloh (Gen 49:10, Ezk 21:25-27) Midrash Rabbah 98 states that Shiloh denotes "to he whose right it is", "to he who it belongs" "he whose right it is" or "to whom Kingship belongs." Rabbinic interpretation associated with the title "Shiloh" with the Messiah or King Messiah whose is the Kingdom.

Note: Ezk 21:25-27 was given to Zedekiah – the last king of the Davidic dynasty.

Worshiping the Lamb

5.6 ⁶And in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as having been slain—having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

- ✓ a Lamb – Arnion: young lamb or young sheep.
 - From Passover when Jewish families were required to keep the sacrificial lamb as a household pet for 4 days before sacrificing. Exo 12:3-6
 - The only other occurrence in the entire Brit Chadashah (New Testament) is John's gospel where it is used of the Messianic Community (John 21:15). John used this title of Yeshua 28 times in Revelation.
 - Twice John the Immerser refers to Yeshua as "the Lamb of God" referring to his sacrifice which would atone for the sins of the world. John 1:29,36
 - Isaiah described the Messiah as a sacrificial lamb, a passage which Philip explained to the Ethiopian eunuch. Isa 53:7, Acts 8:32-35
 - Peter describes the precious sinless blood of Yeshua "as of a lamb without blemish and spot". An allusion to the Passover Lamb whose blood "covered" the Israelites from the destroying angel in the plague which took the first born of Egypt. 1 Peter 1:19, Exe 11:5-6, 12:3-13
 - The blood of the Lamb cleanse a believer of their sin and provides their white robes; it provides eternal life and assures the believer their name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.
- ✓ Standing – hestekos (grk): perfect participle – having stood.
 - The Lamb has been standing there for some time. Having been seated to the right hand of the Father for millennia Yeshua now rises. The time of **sharing the Father's throne** is rapidly drawing to a close. Once He takes the scroll, as the Root of David, He will initiate a series of irreversible events which will result in the establishment of the Davidic Kingdom upon the earth.
- ✓ Slain – esphagmenon (grk): perfect passive participle: of animals, especially when killed as a sacrifice slaughter, slay, metaphorically of Yeshua's atoning death as the Lamb of God. Re: Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament.
 - ¹⁴Just as many were appalled at You - His appearance was disfigured more than any man, His form more than the sons of men. Isaiah 52:14

- ✓ Slain (continued)
 - Heaven and earth will pass away and the former things will pass (Rev 21:1,4) but will the scars of Messiah ever be erased?
 - They are a testimony of His love and resurrection from death. John 20: 20,27
 - They identify Him as Redeemer. Luke 24:30-31
 - Peter tells us He was foretold before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times. 1 Peter 1:20, Rev 13:8, Isa 45:21
 - God provided a detailed picture of the atonement of the cross when Abraham was told to offer Isaac as a picture of another Father's offering of another son on the same mountain years in the future. Gen 22:8
- ✓ seven horns and seven eyes - 7 is perfection, completeness
 - Horn – is a biblical symbol denoting power or government.
 - 7 horns – The complete power of Yeshua and the completeness of His kingdom. His is the only “everlasting dominion”(Dan 7:14) and the “stone cut without hands” that will strike all previous horns (kingdoms) and smash them to pieces. Dan 2:34, 44-46, 7:14’ Phi 2:9-11
 - Eyes – 7 Spirits of God. Zch 3:9
 - Indicates omniscience & complete knowledge and understanding.
- ✓ sent out – perfect passive participle; having been sent out. They were sent in the past and by now have already seen all. Zch 4:2-10

5.7 ⁷ He came and took the scroll from the right hand of the One seated on the throne.

- ✓ took the scroll – eilephen (grk): perfect tense aorist: He went up and took it and now has it. Initiating an action. The Lamb becomes the Lion – He has stood up from His throne; the age of intercession is coming to a close and we will see Him take on a new character.

Note: The “Church Age” is over, now begins the 70th week of Daniel’s prophecy. The redemption of the creation and He is claiming His inheritance. Psa 2:8, 82:8

5.8 ⁸ When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense—which are the prayers of the kedoshim.

- ✓ Harp – kithara: a lyre. It is described by Josephus as an instrument of ten strings played by hand. 1 Cor 14:7
 - The Levites used harps as part of their priestly service ministering to God. 2 Chr 5:12, 29:25
 - The 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel will play harps. Rev 14:1-3
 - All those who have victory over the Beast (antichrist) by refusing the “mark” & worship him and are martyred are given harps. Rev 15:2
 - The Psalmists played harps. Psa 33:2, 43:4, 71:22, 92:3, 149:3, 150:3
- ✓ golden bowls full of incense –
 - In connection with the tabernacle/temple; incense was to be prepared from stacte, onycha, galbanum and frankincense – not for private use.
 - Later, similar bowls will contain wrath of God to be dumped out on the earth. Rev 15:7
 - A possible correlation between the prayers of the Saints offered up to God as incense and resulting vengeance poured out as God’s wrath. Luke 18:7
 - Prior to the sounding of the 7 trumpets an angel offers the prayers of the Saints with incense on an alter before God. He then exchanges the contents of the censor for fire from the alter and throws it to earth resulting in “thundering, lightnings and earthquakes” judgement. Rev 8:3-5

✓ golden bowls full of incense (continued)

- When you pray the Lord's Prayer, you are contributing to this golden bowl.

5.8 ⁸When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense—which are the prayers of the kedoshim.

✓ the prayers of the kedoshim:

- The prayers of God's people everywhere.
- God told Moses to build the alter of incense. Exodus 30:1-10
 - The prayers of the Saints are represented by incense in the context of temple worship and the incense burned which was to offer up a sweet aroma to God & symbolize prayer.
- The prayers of the righteous are pleasing to God. Psa 141:2
- When Gabriel appeared to Zechariah in the Temple to tell him his prayers have been answered, "Gabriel is standing at the right side of the alter of incense". Luke 1:11,
- There are different types of prayer.
 - Supplication: asking for God's help. Phil 4:6
 - Imprecation. Psa 55:2,16, Psa 7
 - Intercession. Luke 23:34, John 17
 - Thanksgiving. 1 Tim 2:1, Phil 4:6
 - Faith. James 5:15, Mark 9:23
 - Corporate. Acts 1:14, 2:42
 - Worship. Acts 13:2-3
 - Consecration. Matt 26:39
- The prayers are not identified but are together in an incense bowl of gold a sweet aroma to God.
- God hears the prayers of his people/Saints.
 - The Saints are not an elite class of people who are more holy than the rest, nor mediators of our prayers (1 Tim 2:5) and don't ask us to pray to them.
 - Saint is parity not hierarchy. Gal 3:28
 - They are all believers in Yeshua, saved by Grace through Faith.
 - The church loved by God and called to be Saints (kedoshim). Rom 1:7
 - Our prayers go to the very throne of God.
- The prayers in Revelation 5:8 are the collective prayers of all believers through all time; everybody and everything consistent with God's will and pleasing to Him.
- Does this verse include praying for the dead?
 - The dead have already sealed their fate. Luke 16:19-31
 - There is no postmortem plan for salvation. 2 Cor 6:2

5.9 ⁹And they are singing a new song, saying, "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals. For You were slain, and by Your blood You redeemed for God those from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

- ✓ are singing – present tense: as if it has already happened using present tense for heightened vividness which transports the reader to the time of action of singing.

- ✓ are singing (continued):
 - In the Old Testament the tribe of Judah (meaning praise Gen 29:35) led the way into battle and so it is here (Judges 20:18) with 24 Elders and 4 Living Creatures.
- ✓ new song – kainen: never heard before. Psalms 96:1-2 “¹Sing to ADONAI a new song! Sing to ADONAI, all the earth. ²Sing to ADONAI, bless His Name. Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Psa 33:3, 98:1, 144:9, 149:1, Isa 42:9-10
 - When we are born again into the family of God, He makes us a new creature in Yeshua. 2 Cor 5:17, Gal 6:15, Eph 2:10
 - A fresh response of praise and thanks from the heart of a worshiper who is filled with wonder and awe at the greatness of God and the salvation He has provided.
 - The Lamb now has the scroll and a new song is breaking forth with the soon to be opened scroll which will bring in His kingdom and eternal reign.
- ✓ Redeemed – egorasas (grk): literally buy, purchase, do business in the marketplace. Matt13:44 Figuratively, as being no longer controlled by sin (set free), from the analogy of buying a slaves freedom for a price paid by the redeemer. 1 Cor 6:20
 - Redemption involves a purchase and those purchased are no longer their own. 1 Cor 7:23, 2 Peter 2:1
 - This purchase was made with the shed blood of Yeshua. Matt 20:28
 - This redemption is both individuals & creation.
 - Similar to Boaz’s redemption of land for Naomi (Ruth 4:1-14). Like Boaz, Yeshua is the Goel – Kinsman Redeemer. Lev 25:25-26
 - Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. Acts 20:28, Col 1:14
- ✓ every tribe and tongue and people and nation. – Global
 - The redeemed come from all people everywhere.
 - They are singing a **new song** to the Lamb who is now the Lion about to unleash the judgements on the earth dwellers.

5.10 ¹⁰You have made them for our God a kingdom and kohanim, and they shall reign upon the earth."

- ✓ made them for our God a kingdom and kohanim – Rev 1:6
 - them: Church Age believers. 2 Cor 3:6, 1 Peter 2:5,9
 - We minister to God as priests and share His reign as Kings. Dan 7:27, Rev 2:26-27, 3:21, 20:6
 - Though believers are currently viewed as a Royal Priesthood this is only the beginning to the fullness of the way they will function alongside Yeshua in the Millennial Kingdom – see promises made to the overcomers in Rev 2 & 3.
- ✓ they shall reign upon the earth – future tense
 - The Saints will be given power over the nations and will co-rule with Yeshua. Rev 2:26-27
 - Sit with Him on His throne. Rev 3:21
 - Millennial Kingdom. Matt 5:5
 - Taking back man’s dominion over the earth which was lost by Adam (Gen 1:26,28) and the restoration of Israel to the promised land. Amos 9:13-15

5.11 ¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders—their number was myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands.

- ✓ myriads of myriads – murias (grk): Ten thousands, a numberless host, innumerable.

5.12 ¹²They were chanting with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

- ✓ 7 attributes received; lambano (grk): to take. to take with the hand, lay hold of, any person or thing in order to use it · to regard any one's power, rank, external circumstances
 - Power – dunamis (grk): miraculous power (miracle), ability, mighty deed, strength
 - Riches – ploutos (grk): ascribed to Yeshua, spiritual, moral, of His goodness & forbearance – longsuffering, His glory, His wisdom & knowledge, of the glory of His inheritance in His Saints.
 - Wisdom – Sophia (grk): Matt 13:54, Mark 6:2, Luke 2:40, 52, 1 Cor 1:30, Col 2:3, Rev 5:12
 - Might – ischus (grk): strength, power, forcefulness.
 - Honor – time' (grk): a value, esteem, used in worship to God.
 - Glory – doxa (grk): honor praise worship dignity
 - Blessing – eulogia (grk): Good speaking, reverent adoration, bounty

5.13 ¹³And I heard every creature in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea and everything in them, responding, "To the One seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and power forever and ever!"

- ✓ every creature – created by God Phi 2:9-11
- ✓ heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea – 4 fold division; universal creation, entire world.
 - Heaven – Ouranos (grk): sky, air, abode of God.
 - Earth – ge (grk): land, soil (including occupants).
 - Under the earth – may refer to those in Hades; both demons in the bottomless pit (Luke 8:31, Rev 9:1-2, 9:11. 11:7, 17:8) and the unsaved dead who wait for the Great White Throne judgement. Rev 20:13
 - Sea – Thalassa (grk) Col 1:15-17

5.14 ¹⁴And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped.

- ✓ Amen – it is and shall be so!