

THE 7 SEALED SCROLL OF REV. 5

The Title Deed to the Earth

Floyd Nolen Jones, Th.D., Ph.D.

Excerpt from Apples of Gold

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Proverbs 25:11

“AND I SAW IN THE RIGHT HAND OF HIM THAT SAT ON THE THRONE A BOOK (scroll) WRITTEN WITHIN AND ON THE BACKSIDE, SEALED WITH SEVEN SEALS.”

Revelation 5:1

What is this scroll? This scroll has writings on it, both on the front and the back. Sealing a scroll was a common and important practice in Biblical times. The most common documents that had 7 seals at the time the apostle John was writing this verse were those of wills (last testaments). For example, the wills of both Emperor Vespasian and Caesar Augustus were secured with 7 seals.

A scribe would take a long roll of parchment and begin writing. After a period of writing he would stop, roll the parchment enough to cover his words, and seal the scroll at that point with wax. Then he would resume writing, stop again, roll the scroll, and add another seal. By the time he had finished, he would have sealed the scroll 7 times. The scroll would be read a section at a time, after each seal was opened. This was done to prevent unauthorized persons from tampering with the scroll or from reading it and learning or revealing its contents. Only a "worthy" person – someone with the proper authority – could have access to the scroll's contents and message.

But again, what is THIS scroll? **This scroll is the title deed to planet earth – it contains GOD'S WILL for man.** Though this is not explained in the immediate context, it is clearly the antitype of the typological teaching associated with God's specific procedures for the redemption of land and people as found in the Old Testament.

This scroll was given to Adam and Eve when God created them and gave them **Dominion** over the earth and everything in and on it. These were God's instructions to the head of the race of mankind, His will for man on earth and hence the principles for Adam to live by and by which to govern his family. It included man's original inheritance from God.

However, Adam fell before he opened the seals. Under testing, he sinned and became unworthy to open the scroll. At that time, Satan snatched the title away from Adam in a desperate attempt to thwart God's plans and purposes for man – which includes his own eternal banishment to Hell.

These plans include man's redemption, restoration, transformation into the image of Christ Jesus, that all the redeemed will know God personally face to face as Adam did before he fell, eternal life in glorified bodies, reigning and ruling with the Lord forever etc. Also included in these plans are the defeat of Satan's regent the Beast (i.e., Anti-Christ) who rules, along with his false prophet, during the 7 year Tribulation, and the death of all the wicked on the earth.

This scroll contains God's plans for the 1000 year reign of Jesus the Christ from David's throne. Next follows the final eternal banishment to Hell of Satan and all of his followers. The reason for this banishment is that they would not repent and receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

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This occurs at the end of the millennial kingdom. After this, the 1000 year reign is transformed into the eternal kingdom with the new heavens and new earth. These are all included within the content of this scroll.

When God gave Adam dominion over the earth, man became the DELEGATED sovereign of planet earth. When Adam chose to obey Satan, he officially forfeited to Satan his right to rule the world. At that moment, The Devil LEGALLY took over dominion of the earth.

Earth rightly belongs to Adam's race, but as a result of our fore-father's capitulation to Satan with the subsequent result that he became Satan's slave;

Romans 6:

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey...

Neither Adam nor any of his descendants – as slaves beget slaves – can qualify to pay the redemption price of the forfeited world and its people. As slaves, they lost all legal rights to their person and their domain. Slaves have no right to possess property or authority to rule, or even the legal right to enter court to file suit to attempt to recover that which was lost through devious guile and subterfuge. Slaves have NO LEGAL RIGHTS.

Someone must be found – if humanity is to escape eternal loss – who is "worthy" to make restitution for man's debt. Note in the following passages:

Revelation 5:

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 saith unto me, weep not: behold, the lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath 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;

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10 And hast made us unto our god kings and priests: And we shall reign on the earth.”

As John looked at this great scroll, he wept much because no man could be found who was untainted with Adam's sin. No man or angel in the universe could claim the right to open this scroll. Could anyone be found to redeem man's lost heritage or was all lost?

The above verses reveal the one Person who qualifies to pay the redemption price and recover the lost heritage. It is the God-man, Jesus the Christ (Messiah), who would pay the debt by voluntarily forfeiting His own life.

In the greater sense, it must be remembered that Adam's rule was not without stipulation. He and all his race were to govern, but that authority and dominion were answerable to GOD, who had given that authority. God demonstrated this by placing Adam and Eve "under orders", namely:

Genesis 2:

16 And the LORD god commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The point is that **the earth is ultimately God's PERMANENT possession by right of creation,** and nothing can ever alter that fact. Satan merely conquered earth's vice-regent, not its King and Owner.

Psalm 24:

1 The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

In the type, this was signified by God's PERMANENT gift of a portion of His land to each family among His chosen people, Israel.

Leviticus 25:

23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.

25 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.

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Just as an Israelite could sell or lose his land for a time, so Adam lost his God-given dominion over the earth. Satan became the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4).

But this situation could only be superficial and temporary, for:

Psalm 115:

16 ...The earth hath he given to the children of men.

A lost estate in Israel could be redeemed by ANY KINSMAN with the purchase price if he were **willing** to do so.

But who and where is one who is both kinsman and redeemer, one who has BOTH the RIGHT and the POWER to take over "the uttermost parts of the earth [for His] possession" (Psa. 2:8)?

The identity of the rightful heir must be determined, and the description is very specific. It must be a man, rather than an angel, for it was man's lost estate that must be reclaimed. Besides, God never gave angles dominion over the earth:

Hebrews 2:

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection The world to come, whereof we speak.

and again:

Psalm 115:

16 ...The earth hath he given to the children of men.

Therefore none of the angelic hosts in heaven, and certainly not the demonic hordes of Satan, could qualify. Though there have been billions of Adam's sons, none of these could qualify for the further reason that their very souls are included in the estate that is to be redeemed.

In all the world's history, there has only been "none righteous, no, not one" (Rom 3:10).

Revelation 5:

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

None of the saints around the throne could even bring himself to dare LOOK at the book, just to see whether he would qualify. They had all experienced the purifying fire of Christ Jesus' judgment on their works (1 Cor. 3:11–15) and of His presence...and had even been MADE like Him (Rom.8:29). But was **by His Grace Only** – not any merit of their own. The one who could open the scroll must do so **by right of His OWN DEMONSTRATED, NOT IMPUTED, MERIT.**

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The only one ABLE to redeem the earth is **the Creator Himself – the ORIGINAL OWNER**. But to be a kinsman of Adam, He must first become a genuine man—the 2nd man, the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45 & 47).

Furthermore, the redemption price cannot be mere money:

1 Peter 1:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

The sinless Lamb of God must die and take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

But even after the price was paid, the great USURPER and PRETENDER must still be expelled forcibly from the redeemed estate before the redemption of the purchased possession would be complete. The rightful owner has been away in heaven preparing a great city as a home for his redeemed ones, to bring back with Him when He returns to take possession of the redeemed earth.

This is also pictured typologically in the Old Testament, this time in terms of the long absence of the whole nation of Judah from its land during the Babylonian captivity.

In token of his faith that God would eventually restore the land to them as He had promised, the prophet Jeremiah, acting on God's instructions, purchased a tract of land which he had the right, as a kinsman-redeemer, to buy – even though he knew the Babylonian invaders (like Satan) would usurp the land for 70 long years (Jer. 25:11).

The evidence of the transaction was buried until such time as the invaders were expelled and the rightful heirs could return to claim it:

Jeremiah 32:

10 And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances.

11 So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open:

12 And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

13 And I charged Baruch before them, saying,

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14 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.

15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.

The deed of sale was written and sealed. A duplicate was also made and left open so as to bear testimony as to what was in the sealed copy, and to be available for records and reference. The sealed copy, however, could only be opened by the rightful owner, and the transaction was not fully consummated until he came forward to break the seals and exhibit the official title deed and right of ownership.

In Jeremiah's case, since there was no safe place for the records to be kept, both copies were buried together. Jeremiah trusted that God would somehow direct his heirs back to claim their inheritance. The heavenly title scroll is only one rather than two, but the import is the same. Remember, it was also written on the "backside", or outside, so there is no need for two scrolls. THE WORD – which is the OPEN record – has been published to the whole creation.

This is the background of the drama that now unfolds in Revelation chapter 5. The Lamb has paid the price to reclaim the lost world. Satan has been brought before the Judge, and in view of his act of securing Jesus' death on the cross;

Hebrews 2:

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

(even though Jesus voluntarily allowed this to transpire) – Satan is declared a murderer. The title deed which he had obtained from Adam upon defeating him has been stripped from his possession by the Father-Judge on the grounds that murderers have no legal right to possess slaves or property. In verse 7, we see the Lord Jesus receive the scroll from the Judge by virtue of his having brought his own blood into the true tabernacle in heaven as testimony that man's debt of sin had been paid. The blood bore witness that a life, a sinless life, had been forfeited.

Ephesians 1:7 (Jesus) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

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Historically, the scene in chapter 5 occurred on resurrection morning – and David foresaw it!

Psalm 2:

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

The book of Acts tells us that the ultimate fulfillment of these verses was at the resurrection:

Acts 13:

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

To beget means to impart life. On resurrection morn, Jesus' dead body was lying in the tomb and Father, by the Holy Spirit, resurrected Him (1 Pet. 3:18). The above verses tell us that this is when it was fulfilled – "this day have I begotten you" from the 2nd Psalm (compare 1 Pet. 1:3 for a similar example).

Daniel also saw this same great event in a vision:

Daniel 7:

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.

Though Jesus received the scroll the morning that He ascended with His blood, He has not yet opened the scroll. He will begin opening the 7 seals 7 years prior to His return. This will initiate the time of The Tribulation period which will culminate with Jesus' physical return to the earth. He will then cast out the invader and usurper, consummate the full redemption of His dearly purchased possession, and establish His 1000 year reign over the earth on David's throne.

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