

A Sealed Scroll

Rev. 5:1
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1. A 4-chapter unit: chapters 5:1-8:1 that provide an understanding to the Jewish crisis of AD 66-70.
2. A quick review of chapters 4:1-8:1

Chapter 4 presents an open door to heaven with God on his throne in his court ready to reveal for us what would take place “after these things” (4:1), that is, after the seven churches and first generation of believers in chapters 2 and 3 had the opportunity to repent and be faithful.

- 2:7
- 2:11
- 2:17
- 2:26
- 3:5
- 3:12
- 3:21

The sovereign judge on his throne (4:2) about to unleash his wrath on the accused first century Jews—time for vengeance (6:9, 10).

Chapter 5 shows us God holding a sealed scroll he wants opened and read (5:1). Only Christ is worthy to be the seal-breaker to open, reveal and execute the decrees of the sealed book. The seven seals of the book are not opened in chapter 5 but in chapters 6-8.

Chapter 6 unseals the first six seals of the book which are about the removal of God’s national church through his Roman army agents; summarized by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:6-8; Luke 21:9-11). Though only 6 of 7 seals are revealed in chapter 6, know that they will eventually be followed by two more units of 7: **seven trumpets (8:6-15:8)**; and then **seven bowls (16:1-21)**. All these sections, are perhaps, best read as units for accurate understanding.

Chapter 7 has Christ ready to pour out his wrath—the great tribulation, on Jerusalem the capital city of the national Jewish church. The wrath of God is restrained. God’s people are protected and become a un-countable number from every nation (v.9).

Chapter 8, brings us the last seal (seal 7 of 7) being broken, and no one but Christ is worthy to break this one as well as the previous ones (5:9; 8:1). The breaking of this seal creates silence in heaven. This final divorce blow is a somber, sober time.

The Harlotrous Path of Israel

1. A description from the prophets: (Ezek.16:8, 32; Isa. 50:1; 62:4; Jer.3:1,8,20; 31:32; Hos.1:2; 2:2, 7, 16; 5:4, 9, 10).
2. What will it take for us to get a proper view of Israel? Israel was adulterous (Mal. 2:11,12).
3. The divorce decree is issued after Jesus came and was rejected (Matt. 21:42-45). Christ marries another, a royal wedding feast with the new bride (Rev.19:7-20). The new bride has become the new Jerusalem beautifully dressed for her husband (21:2).
4. Individual Jews are now joined with individual Gentiles to form a new Christian bride for Christ (Eph. 2:12-22). Jews are not saved by national status but only through faith in Christ (Rom. 10:12; Col. 3:11). Israel as a national church has been divorced, abandoned and rejected.

Four views on the “seven-seal scroll” (Rev.5:1-8:1)

The Greek word for “scroll” (*biblion*) permits several translations (book, scroll, testament, document). What do the four views say?

1. **Historicists say** the scroll of 5:1-8:1 is the history of the major events of the world before the final coming of Christ.
2. **Futurists say**, the scroll is the title deed to earth which God lost to Satan when Adam sinned. They believe earth is repurchased by an angel of God.
3. **Spiritualists say**, the scroll is God's last will and Testament that must be opened to get our inheritance.
4. **Preterist say**, the scroll is the written judgment of God against Jerusalem/national Israel for her unfaithfulness toward him and his covenant and for the shedding of the righteous blood of his messengers (Matt.23:35). Only the preterist view has the scroll strongly applying the text to the original crucifixion-generation audience, which is the audience of the book of Revelation (Rev.1:3; 22:6,10,12; 6:11).

Old Testament Parallels

1. Ezekiel 2:3,9,10.
2. Lev.26:18,24,28.

What is the seven-sealed scroll of Rev.5:1-8:1?

1. **A seven-fold sealed book:** Five times in the Old Testament God refers to a sealed book: Neh. 9:38, 10:1; Isa. 29:11; and Dan. 12:4, 9.
2. **A seven-fold judgment:** Lev.26:18,24,28.
3. **A necessary public divorce decree:** God promised divorce and judgment (see Ezek.16:8, 30-43). The plan to exalt Israel as God's nation and bride is over.
4. **A new groom and bride are exalted:** The heavens worship Christ (Rev.5:7-14).

The Seven-fold Sealed Scroll forecasted by Christ

Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-24; 23:28-31; Matt. 21:43.