***Who is Worthy?  
  
RV94-02***

We are studying the seven-sealed scroll. This is segment number two in Revelation 5:1-5. We continue in God's heavenly throne room. John is standing there in what is the third heaven. He was invited into the divine throne room to be shown the course of human history following the rapture of the church. That was told him in Revelation 4:1, where we read, "After this, I looked up, and behold, a door was opened in heaven, and the voice that I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet talking with me, which said, 'Come up here, and I will show you things which must be hereafter.'" John was told to come up through that open door, and he was going to be given a vision of the course of human history immediately following the rapture of the church.

**The Seven-Sealed Scroll**

While John has been awed by all that he has seen and heard in heaven, he eagerly awaits the vision of the future which has been promised to him. That's understandable. John observes that the heavenly Father is holding a scroll. The scroll lies on the upturned palm of the Father's right hand. The parchment of the scroll is written on both sides, indicating a complete statement of some kind. The scroll was sealed seven times, indicating different sections of the contents. The seals indicated that the contents of the scroll were secret until the seals were broken by someone who had the right and the authority to do so.

The position of the seven-sealed scroll on the upturned palm of the Father's hand indicates that he is waiting now for some qualified person to pick up the scroll and to break the seals. John's acquaintance with the Old Testament use of scrolls gives him an immediate understanding of the meaning of the scroll which is held by the Father. The Bible uses scrolls to record God's impending judgments upon the Jewish nation, and we have looked at some of those. The scrolls in the Bible are sealed in order to keep the information secret and secure until the proper time for revealing the contents. The scrolls in the Bible contained extensive information, and they were, at times, written on both sides. The Bible uses sealed scrolls to record title deeds to a possession which is to be claimed by a future legitimate heir. All these factors of how scrolls are used in the Bible are the issue behind the use of this symbol at this point. Again, we remind you that you have to know how a symbol is used in the Bible before you'll understand the book of the Revelation.

**The Title Deed of the Earth**

So, John understands that the sealed scroll in the Father's hand is the title deed to the authority over the earth. Before the fall into sin in Eden, Adam possessed full authority over God's earth. Satan took the authority from fallen man, and has exercised it to this day. So today, the earth is a place of pain, sorrow, vileness, degeneracy, and death because of Satan's control. Man and his earth are under a divine curse instead of under the delights that once existed in the Garden of Eden.

**The Kinsman Redeemer**

The Lord Jesus Christ, as kinsman redeemer of mankind, has paid the price of redemption on the cross in order to secure again for man dominion over his earth which Satan (the usurper) has wrested from him. This is indicated for us in Ephesians 1:13-14, where Paul says, "In whom (speaking of Christ) you also trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the earnest (the down payment) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

God the Holy Spirit is the seal upon the believer, ensuring that that believer someday will receive the full benefits of redemption, which means a perfect body, like the resurrected body of Christ, fully free from sin; from evil; and, from death itself. The seal of the Holy Spirit is the down payment (or the assurance) that that possession will someday be ours.

So, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the last Adam, is thus entitled to claim the title deed to the earth, and to rule over the earth, which indeed is now his rightful position because of what he did on the cross as the kinsman redeemer. We looked at that doctrine last time. In Matthew 28:18, Jesus says, "All the authority is given unto me in heaven and earth." He is the supreme commander-in-chief.

The title deed scroll contains a detailed record of how the Lord Jesus Christ will claim his place of authority over the earth. The tribulation events will follow to execute this deed. The redemption of planet earth is awaiting the return of Christ from heaven. This is what Paul indicates in Romans 8:21-22. Paul says, "Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now."

When God first created the earth, it wasn't like it is now. It wasn't a place that was hard for things to grow. It wasn't a place where there was violence in the animal world. It wasn't a place that was filled with disease, corruption, degeneracy, and death. All of that is the result of the fact that man lost control of his world. He lost the title deed. The point of what Christ is doing is repossessing that. Paul says that all of creation just sits there groaning and saying, "Oh, I just hope it's going to be today. I hope the time is already here when we can straighten this all out again, and we can remove the curse of God which is upon the earth because Satan is in control."

The redemption of the earth includes, of course, the redemption of our bodies. In Romans 8:23, Paul says "And not only they but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption that is the redemption of our body." So, the title deed includes the redemption of our body; that is, the restoration of us to absolute physical perfection such as Adam possessed.

So, the final goal of the title deed which Jesus Christ has now legally secured, relative to his authority over the earth, is to produce a new heaven and a new earth. Therefore, Revelation 21 says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea." It will all be corrected.

**Grace before Judgment**

While the Lord Jesus Christ has thus redeemed creation from Satan's authority, and while Jesus Christ now owns the earth, holding it in behalf of mankind, Satan has been indeed given a grace period. The deed has not been executed. He's been given a grace period to complete his work of rebellion. This is the way God works. He always gives a grace period to run yourself down into the ground, and to get yourself down into the hole (if you insist on doing it) before He brings judgment. And while there are people (and we ourselves may think we're getting away with something) it is simply the God of grace who is giving us a chance to let the old sin nature rebellion run its course before He brings judgment. That is an automatic principle of Scripture. You must never forget. There is always grace before judgment. But the judgment is inevitable for those who do not use the time of grace to make correction.

So, Satan indeed has time to carry out his rebellion. But the divine delay in repossessing the earth from Satan is also a period of grace for all the lost of this dispensation to be saved, and to escape the tribulation period. The longer God delays sending His Son back, the longer people have as an opportunity to be born again, if somebody has given them the information. And remember that anybody in this world today who is not born again at the point of the rapture goes into the tribulation, and he is going to suffer all of that agony.

Those of you who are students of history (students, particularly at times of war) can be awed by the slaughter that is involved. Unless you have a little experience, or have read about this, you have no idea what slaughter in combat is like, and what life is in a combat zone, and what life is for civilians who are in a war condition. There's been nothing in the worst times of human history compared to what's going to come in the tribulation. Death and blood-flowing will be as daily an occasion with everybody as eating and breathing. It will be something in that tribulation that you will never be able to remove yourself from. The terror that you are next will hang over your head. So, this is a marvelous thing. Jesus Christ has the title deed back. He has paid the price, and the earth is redeemed. But this is a period of grace for people to turn and to escape that doom, and for you and I to give them a chance by telling them the gospel.

John realizes, therefore, from all of this, that the seven-sealed scroll which he sees in the Father's hand contains the records of what he was called up there to see – that which is described as "the things which must be hereafter," meaning after the rapture. He was invited into heaven to see these things, and John is ready to go. Human history indeed rests in the Father's hand. Apart from the person and redeeming work of Jesus Christ, history has no purpose. It is without goal. It has no happy ending.

**An Angel**

So, we come to Revelation 5:2, which says, "And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll, and to lose the seals?" Here again, we have the Greek word "horao" for the word "saw," which is the panoramic view. John takes in the whole scene at once. Then he says that what he observes then is an angel. It's an "aggelos." This word basically means "messenger." But it is also a technical word for the angelic type of messenger – the spirit beings which God created before man, and which the Bible says are in a category of creation which are a step above man, because they are not limited to the limitations of man in the time and space factors.

**A Mighty Angel**

John observes, in his overall view, this angel. This angel is described as being a "mighty" angel. It's this Greek word "ischuros." "Ischuros" means "mighty;" that is, he is a particularly strong angel. Angels, as you know, are strong to begin with. For example, in Psalm 103:20, we had this pointed out to us: "Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word." What the psalmist is saying is that angels by nature are super strong. People who have had occasion to deal with the demonic world discover indeed how super-strong those angels are, because the demonic angels are also super-strong, and they use it in a vile and evil way. It is not uncommon for people who deal with demons to find enormous things taking place – physical movements that no human being can do, but that the super strength of an angel can easily do.

John recognized that this mighty angel that he sees, for some reason, is even stronger than that. This is a really super super strong angel. It may be that this is Gabriel. Gabriel's name means "strength of God." Furthermore, the Bible tells us that Gabriel is the messenger angel. He is the informing angel. He is the one that goes around making divine proclamations. We have that several places in the Bible. For example: Daniel 8:16; Daniel 9:22; Daniel 10:14; Daniel 10:21; Daniel 11:2; Luke 1:13; Luke 1:14-17; Luke 1:26ff; and, Luke 1:35. In all of these places, you have Gabriel. And there he is: God's proclaiming herald; or, God's special messenger. So, perhaps this is Gabriel that we're dealing with here. Interestingly enough, what he says is described as a proclamation. It's a "kerusso." "Kerusso" is the word that is used for a herald who is making an official declaration. This angel stands up there, and he is personally doing this. It's in the present tense, which means that he is saying this several times. He is repeatedly making this particular proclamation.

We are told that he is doing this in a particular kind of voice. It is described by two words: "megas" which means "loud;" and, by "phone" which means "voice." This is a loud voice. You can see that from these words, "megas" and "phone," we get the English word "megaphone," which is a device for expanding the loudness of a voice. So, this angel is speaking in such a powerful voice that it's heard in all the appropriate places of creation.

This is the sort of thing that the people on earth during the tribulation are going to experience. They're going to be on this earth, and all of a sudden, out in outer space, there are going to come these thundering voices of divine proclamation. I don't care where you are on the face of the earth. You're going to hear a voice coming out from outer space, and it's going to be just as if you stood in a room and somebody was shouting at you.

**Who is Worthy?**

So, here John, in heaven, hears this reverberating voice echoing throughout all creation making a certain proclamation. This indicates a dramatic moment in history. This angel proclaims with a loud voice, and what he proclaims is a question: who is worthy to open the scroll? The word "worthy" is "axios" in the Greek language, which means "fitting" or "qualified." The opener of the scroll has to be someone who is entitled to open it. When Jeremiah hid his title deed in the appropriate jar before he went into Babylonian captivity, so that when his heirs returned, they could pull that legal document out and claim the property that he had bought from Hanameel, his cousin, only those heirs were entitled to break the seals on that document. Only those heirs who owned that property had the title to take that deed and to execute it.

So, the angel is saying: "Who has the moral and regal fitness to rule the earth? Who has the right to exercise authority over the earth? Who has paid the price of redemption that entitles him to rule over the earth? Who is it that has the power to terminate Satan's dominion over the earth, and to throw him out?" The question is not: "Who is strong enough?" The question is: "Who is qualified as a kinsman redeemer?" That's what he means by being "worthy." What the angel is asking is: "Who is qualified to open the scroll?" The Greek word is "anoigo," and it refers to unrolling the scroll to read its contents. At some point in time, this will be the act of some individual. It's in the infinitive mood, which indicates a purpose. Who can execute the purpose of unrolling this scroll? That is the divine purpose for that little scroll in the Father's hands.

It says "to lose:" "luo." The word here means "to break" the seals. The word "seals" is "sphragis." That is that word we have had for the impression in wax seven times on the scroll.

**Daniel**

The angel calls in a loud voice: "Who is worthy to unroll the scroll? Who is authorized to break the seals?" This is interesting if this is the angel Gabriel who is making this proclamation, because it was the angel Gabriel who revealed the contents of what is in that scroll that is in the Father's name to Daniel. The contents of that scroll was revealed to the prophet Daniel. Then, Daniel was told to put a seal on it, and to keep the thing secret. Daniel had been given a divine revelation concerning the future of God's dealing with the nation Israel. Daniel was a captive in Babylon, and he was an outstanding government official. However, because he was a good student of the Bible, and because he studied the prophets, he realized that the Babylonian captivity had a time period on it. The prophets clearly said, "You're going to be there for 70 years." That's why the Lord said, "Go ahead and take your cousin's offer. He thinks he's going to make some money off of you, but his heirs will be the losers. Buy it, because I'm telling you, Jeremiah, 70 years is all that captivity is going to last, and then they're going to come back. And your heirs will be here to enjoy that new property and to get a new start."

**Gabriel**

So, Daniel began figuring the time table (the schedule) since all of this took place. And he realized that the 70 years was almost up, and that the whole period was almost terminated. So, he goes to God and he says, "Lord, what are you going to do with the Jewish people?" And God sends Gabriel with the answer. However, it takes Gabriel three weeks to get there, because as he goes out of the throne room, Satan gets the word that the message of the future of Israel, and thus for the guidance of the nation, is going to be delivered to Daniel, and Satan puts out some of his highest classification of angels. Angels have power by the classification of the class of angel that they are. Satan sends out his front-line demons, and they are able to overpower the angel Gabriel, and to contain him.

**Michael**

Finally, God sends the archangel Michael and says, "I want you to go there; I want you to break that containment; and, I want you to get Gabriel through." Finally, Michael, who is an archangel (the supreme power), breaks the delay and breaks the containment. Gabriel goes through and appears to Daniel to deliver the message. It is at that time that the timetable of human history is delivered. God says, "I have 490 years that I'm going to deal with Israel." That was exciting news in itself. 490 years was all the history that Israel has left. The book of Daniel spells it out.

However, then the book gets to a point where it says that there's going to be a break: "After 483 years, there's going to be a break, because the Jews are going to refuse the Messiah. On the very verge of the fulfillment, they're going to reject the Messiah, and, at that point, the prophetic clock, Daniel, is going to stop ticking, and My 490-year time period is going to be brought to a halt, and seven years will be left unfulfilled of my dealing with Israel. At that point in time, I'm going to wash my hands of the Jews, and I'm going to turn them loose to be the dog's tail to be under everybody's food to be the curse and to be the garbage of the earth because, they rejected My Son. So, that seven-year period has never been fulfilled. That seven-year period is the tribulation era.

Gabriel was the one who came to make the detailed revelation as to what was going to happen in that seven years. That's what John is interested in knowing about. John knows what happened in the 483 years. He has read the Old Testament; he knows the record; and, he knows what the experience of the nation has been. But what about the last seven years? John is in the same place, in effect, as Daniel was. And he is asking God, "Where is history moving? What's in store for us?"

So, the revelation that is given to Daniel actually extends to the time of the great tribulation; through it; to the resurrection; and, to the reward of the righteous. The agent of this divine revelation was the angel Gabriel. Daniel 9:21-22: "Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. Then he informed me, and talked with me, and said, 'Oh, Daniel, I am now come forth to give you skill and understanding.'" If you'll compare that with Daniel 8:15-16, you'll see what Daniel is referring to: Daniel says, "And it came to pass when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called and said, 'Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.'"

So, what Daniel is saying in Daniel 9:21-22, when he calls Gabriel a man, is that Gabriel looked like a man. He's referring to the same Gabriel that came to explain to him the previous visions that Daniel had been given concerning the progress of world empires. So, this one, who looked like a man, appears again now to Daniel. When he finishes giving him this information, he tells Daniel something very strange. In Daniel 12:9, we read, "And he said (that is the angel Gabriel), 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the end of time.'" This great revelation is to be sealed.

It is interesting that Daniel was told things that he himself could not understand concerning the tribulation era. This is indicated in Daniel 12:8, where he says, "And I heard, but I didn't understand. Then I said, "O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" These things were awesome to Daniel. He just couldn't comprehend them. He couldn't bring them all together. The things that are told that are taking place during the revelation were awesome. Daniel said, "I don't understand this. I don't understand some of these movements."

Well, part of the problem was where he lived. It's a whole lot easier for us to understand 2,500 years later. Because we have such a greater frame of reference of where history has gone, and what has taken place, it's a lot easier for us to understand what the book of the Revelation is telling us about the tribulation era. But the point to notice is that, while Daniel didn't understand, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit ensured that Daniel would produce an accurate, inerrant record, even though he did not understand its contents. That's important to know. What Daniel said was absolutely accurate, even though he did not fully understand what he wrote. That is the beauty of the doctrine of inspiration.

So, the revelation to Daniel was not primarily for his benefit, but it was for those who are living at the end of the age of the church. It was to help those who are in affliction at the end of the age, and particularly, to help those who, unfortunately, reject Christ during the age of the church, and find themselves in the sufferings of the tribulation. Those who are in the tribulation can still be born again, but they will not have the privilege of being part of the body of Christ. They will not have the privilege of being part of the bride of Christ, and being His associates in ruling over the millennial world. That privilege is restricted to those who accept Christ in this age.

So, the revelation to Daniel was for the benefit of people down the line. 2,500 years after Daniel's time, we now come to the point where what he was told is of utmost importance to those of us who are now living. Daniel was told that what he had, in Daniel 12:9, would be closed and "sealed until the time of the end." This phrase in Daniel refers to the time when the antichrist violates his covenant with the nation of Israel in the middle of the tribulation period. Daniel was told that there would be a strong man, a ruler over the earth, and that this man would make a covenant with the Jewish people to be their protector. Daniel 9:27 tells us about that protection, and about the great double-cross: "And he (the antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." This week refers to the tribulation period of seven years: "And in the midst of the week (after three-and-a-half years), he shall cause the sacrifice and the obligation to cease, and for the spreading of abominations. He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured out upon the desolate."

What this means is that, in the middle of the tribulation period, the Jews, who are under the protection of the antichrist have been able to rebuild their temple, and have been able to restore their ancient ceremonies and practices, are suddenly going to discover that they have a false protector. He turns on them and says, "Now I'm taking over the religious system. And instead of the God you have been worshiping, you've got a new God – me." And he puts his image in the temples for them to worship. Then he begins the world's greatest persecution that the Jews have ever suffered. It will make Hitler's persecution look like a real Sunday school picnic. The time of the end begins with this double-cross, and that's what he's referring to.

The things that are sealed in the revelation that Daniel was not to reveal, which is in the scroll in the Father's name, is not to be set in motion until that last three-and-a-half years of the tribulation era. That's where John is at this point. The church is there. The Judgment Seat of Christ has been passed. The Christians have been rewarded according to that judgment. The tribulation has been rocking along for three-and-a-half years. The Jews have thought they finally have got it made. Now, suddenly, up in heaven, the first seal is about to be broken, and the contents of Daniel's secrets are to be revealed and executed upon the earth, providing there is somebody who is entitled to break the seal – someone who has the right to that title deed.

So, the time to the end begins with the breaking of the promise, and the end of it is with the destruction of the antichrist with the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. That's indicated in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, where we read, "And then shall that wicked one be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming," referring to the destruction of the antichrist at the Second Coming of Christ. The duration of the time of the end, three-and-a-half years, is the last half of the tribulation era. That is indicated in Daniel 7:25.

**The Time of Jacob's Trouble**

This is also the period that the Bible describes as "the time of Jacob's trouble," and the time of the great tribulation upon the Jews. In Jeremiah 30:7, the last half of the tribulation is referred to, where he says, "Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it. It is even the time of Jacob's trouble. But he shall be saved out of it." It is the time of the Jews' darkest hour, but the nation of Jews will survive.

**The Great Tribulation**

It is also called the period of "the great tribulation." The whole tribulation is seven years, but the last half is called the great tribulation. Matthew 24:21 refers to that, where Jesus says, "For then shall be great tribulation such as it was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be." If you follow the time pattern there in the context, you'll see that you come to the middle of the tribulation (to the middle of the seven-year period). Jesus calls that the great tribulation.

So, Daniel was told that the meaning of the prophecies given him would not be understood in his day, but they would be understood (he was told) later, by those to whom they pertained. Divine revelation is not understood by the unbeliever, but at the right time, prophecy is made clear to the believers for their comfort and for their direction.

So, the angel Gabriel, who told Daniel to seal up the prophecies given about the future of mankind in that great tribulation era, is probably the one who, here in Revelation 5:2, is calling for someone now to reveal those same prophecies. When John finishes recording the vision of the future given to him, he is told not to seal up this book. When he finishes writing Revelation, this is to be open knowledge. Revelation 22:10: "And he said unto me, 'Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.'" The time of the end, beginning with the middle of the tribulation to the coming of Christ the second time to this earth – that time of the end is now at hand, and therefore, all of the information is very pertinent.

So, the neglected book of the Revelation is an open book – not a closed book. It is only closed to human viewpoint carnal minds. It is one of the most important books for Christians to understand today. And the average preacher doesn't dare touch it because of his disorientation; his confusion; and, his inability to separate the Jew; the gentile; and, God's programs for each of them.

So, here's the picture. Who is going to open it? What has been sealed to Daniel is now ready to be opened. In verse 3, John looks around the heavenly throne room, eagerly anticipating someone to do it. Then he gets a big shock: "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the scroll nor to look into it." "No man" is the Greek word "oudeis," and it means "no one." It even means "not even one:" "Not one in heaven" ("ouranos"). This has the definite article: "Not one in *the* heaven," thus making it specifically the third heaven of God's throne room. Here is John standing in God's throne room. He's surrounded by millions upon billions of Christians, members of the body of Christ. His eye travels over that vast crowd there. Somebody (one of these people) surely can come up now, and turn loose the authority of Christ on the earth. But everybody stands silent. His eyes move over toward the elect angels. Here are the four mighty cherubim (honor guards), standing at the four sides of the throne. What do they do? There is only silence. None of them step forward and say, "I'm authorized to break the seal."

Then John's mind went to a different direction. He said, "No one in heaven nor in." The word "in" is actually "epi," which means "on:" "No one in heaven nor on earth." The word "earth is the Greek word "ge:" "No one on the earth, and it is "*the* earth:" the place of the abode of people. There is nobody on the whole planet earth who can do this. Here is this great voice saying, "Who's going to open it?" Nobody on all the planet earth steps forward and says, "I'll do it. I'm authorized to do it."

And then John says, "Maybe there is one other place where there is someone who could do it." He says, "Under the earth." That is the word "hupokato." Actually, this word means "inside the earth," and it refers to the planet earth: "Inside *the* earth," referring to Hades, the place of the lost dead. None of them speak up and say, "I'm qualified." Hitler is down there in Hades. He doesn't speak up. Stalin is there in Hades. He doesn't speak up. Genghis Khan is out there in Hades. He doesn't speak up. The whole gang is there. All of the worst tyrants the world has ever seen – they all wanted to rule the world. They all wanted to claim authority over the world. Here's their chance to step up and claim authority to break the seals of the title deed of possession of the earth. None of them speak.

The appeal for one qualified to break the seals of the scrolls is addressed to the whole universe: celestial; terrestrial; and, infernal. This is the same threefold division that you have in Philippians 2:10 as to those who are going to praise Jesus Christ: "That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow: of things in heaven; things in earth; and, things under the earth." This is the same threefold division, and it means the same thing. No matter what you want to say concerning those who reject Jesus Christ, the Bible says that the time is coming when all the celestial; all the terrestrial; and, all the infernal creatures are all going to bow to Jesus Christ. Nobody will escape.

However, what John discovers is that from all those places, "There was nobody who was able." The word "able" is the Greek word "dunamai;" that is, he "had the capacity:" "There was nobody who was able to open the scroll;" that is, to unroll the little scroll: "And nobody who was qualified to look at it." This time, we have a different word for "look." It isn't that "horao," which is that overall panoramic look. This is "blepo," which is to focus in on the thing – a close look. What John wants to do is to have someone who can come up, and break the seal, and read it. He wants to look into it to see what Daniel was told that he was not permitted to let anyone else know. He wants someone who can look into it close. "Blepo" is present tense. He was continually unable. It is active. Nobody could do it. It's infinitive mood, indicating that the purpose was to look into it. That's the purpose that John had in mind. But nobody could do it. There was no one who was a qualified executor to unroll the scroll; read its contents; and, execute its decrees.

So, John realized that there was no one to bring in the earth's golden age of freedom from Satan's authority – no one to pull it off. All the efforts of the unregenerate producers of human good who spent their time trying to produce a utopia for mankind for all these centuries – not a one of them speaks up. Men who tried to rescue themselves from their own pit of sin through politics; through religion; through the arts; through science; through philosophy; through psychology; and, even through war, but without success. None of the world's tyrants who are burning in Hades step forward to claim the right to redeem the world. When John realizes that, it hits him, and it hits him personally.

**John Cried**

In verse 4, he expresses his response. He says, "And I." In the Greek language, the word "I" is not usually expressed by itself. It's usually part of the verb. In this case, it is separate. And when it wants to stress the person individually feeling something, then they use the word. He expresses with emphasis himself (personally) that he was doing something. Suddenly, he realized that he was crying. The Greek word is "klaio," which is the word for physical weeping. It's in the imperfect tense, which means repeatedly. John says, "I sobbed and sobbed, and I kept crying." It is active. John was doing it. It's a statement of fact.

Furthermore, it wasn't just a little sad weeping. It says it was much ("polus"), indicating that he was shaking all over with sobs. He was just broken down. He had come to such a high point and such an expectation. What had been hidden over the centuries (revealed to Daniel, but hidden), now is about to be opened. He was invited to heaven to see what was in there – to see what God had in store for the rest of humanity before God's dealings with the Jewish people were over. Yet, nobody responded. So, John said, "I was crying."

He says, "Because" ("hoti"), explaining why. He says, "Because there was no one who could be found at any point (anybody to be found) who, again, was worthy to open." The words "and to read" in the King James translation are not in the Greek. But the point is that there was no one: "to open the book, neither to look on it." Again, it's that word "blepo" ("to look at it closely"). This is the constant (present tense) purpose. It is active – for somebody to do it. It is infinitive. The purpose is to look at it.

So, John experiences enormous disappointment. What he thought he was about to discover suddenly remains closed to him. At that point, a heavenly comforter walks up to him. This heavenly comforter brings to his attention that there is an answer. In the process of bringing to John's attention that there is someone who is qualified to break the seals, he gives us some information about that person that reveals the nature of what God is going to do in the tribulation period.

At this point, the amillennialists have missed the boat and completely distorted human history. It has been one of Satan's great victories. Just as we've been seeing that, here in the heavenly throne room, God the Holy Spirit, brings certain things to John's attention in order to counter certain great misconceptions that are going to come down the line. These include the misconception concerning the nature of God, and the substitution of Eastern mysticism and its impersonal God for the reality that is there. There is the misconception of evolution for the God who is Creator, and who is the authority that has put it together. Periodically great words are put in, and great things are said about God in order to call to John's attention to something that is enormously important about God, and about what He's doing, to counter down the centuries an evil (a heretical thought) that's going to come in.

In verse 5, he does it again. He throws in a few words of enormous importance. You can run your eye over that verse, and not realize that God the Holy Spirit very carefully picked those words in order to make something clear that is unclear among Christians, by and large, today. It is another one of those satanic confusions that has resulted in weakness in the body of Christ, and in undermining the efforts of Christian service.

So, next time we will take up the elders' comfort, and the enormously important revelation concerning the one who is qualified to open those seals.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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