

# THE BOOK OF DESTINY IS SEALED: THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD REVELATION 05:01–04

## *Introduction*

There should be no break between chapters four and five. The same scene of God's throne is being covered. God is seen sitting upon His throne and holding a sealed book in His right hand. Note again, the book is sealed. It has never been opened. The importance of the sealed book cannot be over-emphasized. The book is the key to understanding the rest of Revelation. The book or scroll is the official document of the last days of human history, the climactic events of the universe. The world's future is about to be unfolded before one's very eyes (cp. Rev 1:1) (Note: a person might want to combine this outline and the next if he has the time.)

- I. The book itself (v. 1).
- II. The search for one worthy to open the Book of Destiny (v. 2-4).

### **I. *Revelation 05: 01 The Book of Destiny***

There is the book itself.

1. John sees God holding the book in the palm of His right hand. The picture is this:  
God is extending the book outward, poised to hand it to someone if a person can be found worthy enough to open it. The fact that God Himself is holding the book in His right hand shows us several things:  
=> God is the supreme Authority over the end of the world. He governs all the events of history both upon the earth and throughout the universe. God holds the future in His hands, the destiny of the world.

*1 Tim 1:17* Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

*Rev 19:6* Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns."

*Exo 15:18* "The Lord reigns for ever and ever."

- => God is ready to carry out and execute the events. He is ready for the end time to begin, ready for the end of the world to be launched. It is simply a matter of finding someone worthy to carry out and oversee the events for God.
  2. The book is written on both the front and back of the pages. The book was actually a roll or a scroll. Remember: there were no printing presses or books as we know them back then. They wrote on small sheets of paper (papyrus) about ten inches by eight inches, close to the size of our eleven by eight and one half inch sheets. If a
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large amount of writing was to be done, they joined or taped sheets together. When the writing was completed, they rolled the sheets up and tied some thread or ribbon around the roll. This is what is meant by the book being sealed. They seldom wrote on the back side, for whatever was written on the back side would be exposed when the last sheet was rolled up and tied.

Again, note that the book or scroll held by God *was written* on both the front and back. This shows us...

- that the events of the end time are many and that it will take some time, a great deal of time, for all of them to take place.
- that God is going to reveal a great deal about the end time to man. When? As soon as He can find someone worthy enough to open the book.

3. The book is sealed with seven seals. This shows us three things.

- a. The seven seals show us that the book is the last will and testament of God. In the Roman world a man's will had to be witnessed by seven persons, and each attached his own personal seal to one of the threads of the document. The will could be opened only when the recipient came to claim the will. This book in God's right hand may mean that it is His last will for the earth; the book contains what He wills for those who have rejected and cursed Him and what He wills for those who have accepted and worshipped Him. The book is His last will and testament for the consummation of the world.
- b. The seven seals show us that the book is large; it has a great deal of material in it. It has so much that seven seals are required to bind and hold it together. Again, this means...
  - that there are a lot of events that are included in the end time; that many events are to take place.
  - that God is going to reveal much to man as soon as someone is found worthy enough to open this book.
- c. The seven seals also show us the secrecy of the book. God has sealed the book with seven seals in order to keep the events of the end time from being known. They are not to be known by man until God Himself is ready to reveal them. Man can never figure out the events, not by his own intellect.

*Rom 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!*

## **II. Revelation 05:02–04 The One Worthy to Open the Book of Destiny**

There is the search for one worthy to open the book. Note four significant facts.

1. John saw a strong angel — an angel so strong that he could shout throughout the universe and be heard by all in both heaven and earth. He shouted out the most penetrating question of human history: “Who is worthy to break the seals and open

the scroll?” This shows us how supreme and majestic God really is. He is so far above all creatures — even the creatures in heaven as well as those on earth — that a search has to be conducted to find someone who is worthy to approach Him and carry out His will.

2. The search fails. There just is no being any place that is worthy to approach God and to execute His will throughout the universe.
  - a. No person in heaven was found worthy to open the book. Imagine! The glorious angels, the seraphim and cherubim, the four living creatures privileged to surround the throne of God, the twenty-four elders, all the redeemed — no being in heaven was worthy enough to approach God and open the book.
  - b. No person on earth was found worthy to open the book: no statesman, no educator, no scientist, no minister, no prophet, no astrologer, no magician.
  - c. No person under the earth: no person from among the dead — as great as some have been in past history — no person from the past was found worthy to open the book.

*1 Cor 2:7-8* No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

*1 Cor 2:14* The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

*2 Cor 4:4* “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God”

*Eph 4:18* “They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts”

3. The search fails, and John breaks down and cries bitterly. Why? There were two reasons. Because John saw something that he had never seen before:

=> John saw the greatness of God, the supreme majesty and glory of God, how far superior God is to all living creatures.

There was not a single person or being any place that could be found worthy to approach God and open the book and carry out the events of human history. All creatures were too short of God's glory — all creatures, both of heaven and earth were so far short of God's glory and majesty they just could not approach God, not apart from His glorious mercy and grace. As stated, John saw as never before the greatness of God, the glory and majesty, the dominion and power of God, how high and how far superior God is to all creatures. God broke John in humility and with a sense of his own unworthiness. John wept bitterly at his own unworthiness before God who is so high and lifted up.

**Mat 3:11** *“I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”*

**Mat 8:8** *The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.”*

**Mat 10:38** *“And anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.”*

**Luke 3:8** *“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.”*

**Luke 15:19, 21** *‘I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ ...The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’*

**Luke 21:3** *“Truly I tell you,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others.”*

But John wept for another reason as well: he was not going to be able to see the future of the world, the events of the end time. The promise had been made to him that he would see these things that “will take place later,” but now he was not going to see them. And why? Because there was no person worthy to approach God and open the book. He and all the other beings of heaven and earth were too far short of God to understand and execute the will of God for the end time.

**Luke 21:36** *“Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”*

**John 13:7** *Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”*

**John 16:12** *“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.”*

**1 Cor 13:12** *Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*

4. The reason no person is worthy to open this book is because of its contents. The book is the destiny of the world — what is to happen in the end time at the end of the world. Chapters 6-21 show this clearly. It is the book of redemption (cp. Lk. 21:28; Rom 8:22-23; Eph 1:13-14). God’s people are to be redeemed and the evil and corrupt people are to be overthrown and judged. Human history and all matter throughout the universe — all that is corrupt, deteriorating, decaying, and dying — is to be overthrown and consumed. And a new earth and a new heaven are to be created. All the redeemed are to inherit and inhabit the new earth and heavens. This is both the fate and the redemption of the world. This is history written before it happens. Therefore, the person who opens this book must be a person who can grasp exactly

what the book is saying, and then he must be able to carry out God's will and execute the events. The person must have the very mind and power of God. Who can execute and rule over the events of the end time? There is only one such Person: the Son of God Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ and Christ alone is worthy to open the book. This is the book of redemption, the book of historical optimism. The same book is referred to in Daniel 12:8-9 and Ezekiel 2:9-10. The message of this book is now prophesied as the seals are broken and the events of the last days are seen. Note the size and thickness of this particular scroll. It takes seven seals to bind it. All that is in the rest of Revelation is contained therein.

Note also, the book is in God's hand. History is in God's hand. He is in charge. He has a plan, a purpose for the universe. Who is worthy to carry out this plan, this purpose? Who can rule and reign over these events? The idea is that Christ and Christ alone is worthy.

**Thought 1.** Note that the same book is referred to by Ezekiel and Daniel.

**Ezek 2:9-10** *Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll, which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe.*

**Dan 12:8-9** *I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?" He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end."*

**Thought 2.** Note three significant lessons for us.

1) The book is in God's hand. He is in charge of human history, and He has a definite plan and purpose for the universe. The fear of the *bomb*, an *unstable economy*, the *environment*, the *drugs*, the *criminal society*, and the other *massive problems* of the world seem to have no answer. But God does: He is going to bring history to a climax and establish righteousness throughout all the earth. The believer is to be the most optimistic person on earth.

**John 14:2-3** *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

**Titus 2:12-13** *It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

**1 John 3:2** *Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

2) We should all bow in utter humility and dependency upon God, for He is higher above us than even the outer reaches of space. His glory is set above the heavens.

We are nothing before Him; consequently, we should live in the reverence and fear and worship of Him, praising Him day and night while we have breath.

**Psa 95:6** *Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.*

**Psa 96:9** *Worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.*

**Mat 04:10** *Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan: For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"*

**John 4:24** *"God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth."*

**Rev 14:7** *He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water."*

**Rev 22:9** *But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"*

3) We should pay close attention to the book of Revelation, study and live in its message. It is the revelation of God's will for the end time, the events that are yet to take place throughout the universe.

**Eph 3:5** *[The mystery of God] Which was not made known to men in other generation as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.*

**2 Tim 2:15** *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

**2 Tim 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

**1 Pet 2:2-3** *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

**Acts 17:11** *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*

**Acts 20:32** *Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ■*