

Behold the Lamb – Revelation 5:1-7

INTRO • Read vs. • Sweet Real Estate Deals

1. Check out these sweet real estate deals.
2. In 1626, Dutch explorer Peter Minuit bought the Island of Manhattan for trade goods valued at \$24.
 - a. The Dutch made out – but so did the Native Americans he traded with.
 - b. Turns out they weren't the tribe that lived there.
 - c. Today, Manhattan is some of THE most expensive land on the planet.
 - d. It's valued at about \$500 per sq. ft.!!!
3. In 1867, Sec of State William Seward persuaded Congress to shell out \$7 million for the Alaska Territory to Russia.
 - a. The press had a heyday with the story, calling Alaska *Seward's Icebox & Walrussia* because it was only fit to be occupied by walruses.
 - b. 30 years later those news editors were eating crow because gold was discovered in the Yukon.
 - c. And today, Alaska is a treasure trove of natural resources, including massive oil reserves.
4. Then there's Hong Kong. The British gained control of the Island in 1842 as a permanent territory.
 - a. But they wanted some additional land & signed a 99-yr lease with China in 1898.
 - b. Hong Kong then went on to become one of the trade & financial centers of the world.
 - c. It all reverted to Chinese rule in 1997 – without the Chinese having to pay a penny.
5. As astounding as these deals are, they pale in comparison to the real estate transaction we're looking at today.

V.1

¹ And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.

1. As we saw last week, John is given a vision of God's throne room in heaven.
 - a. He sees the throne & describes the glory that radiates from God.
 - b. Around the throne stand the 4 cherubim as a kind of ceremonial honor guard.
 - c. They continually declare God's holiness.
 - d. Then as John's vision widens out he sees 24 elders, representing God's people from all history, sitting on thrones **around** God's.
 - e. They join the cherubim in worshiping God.
2. As John returns his attention to the center of it all, He sees God holding a scroll.
3. John's description marks it as a **Title Deed**.
4. Nearly all ancient documents were scrolls.
 - a. They were written on one side & fastened by a wax seal.
 - b. A 7-sealed scrolls written on both sides was a special kind of *legal document* ; a *title deed* to a piece of property.
5. Some background is needed.
 - a. God gave the land of Canaan to the people of Israel.
 - b. After the Conquest of Canaan by Joshua, the tribes dispersed to their assigned regions and divided up the land among the families of each tribe.
 - c. Each families land was theirs FOREVER.
 - 1) It couldn't be sold off.
 - 2) But it could be rented out for no more than 6 years.
 - 3) It the 7th, it reverted back to it's owner.
 - d. If a person fell into **debt**, his land was assumed by the creditors; but again, for a maximum of 6 years.
6. All land had a title-deed that spelled out its boundaries & the family's right to it. All that was written on the **INSIDE** of the scroll.
7. If the owner was in debt & had to turn his land over to creditors, they wrote on the **outside** of the deed the terms for repayment of the debt so the land could be reclaimed before the 6 years was up.
8. 7 seals were placed on it, marking the yrs the land was forfeit till it could be reclaimed if the repayment wasn't made before then.

9. But there was **one more provision** in God's Law for reclaiming land.
 - a. If a man was unable to repay his debts, a relative could reclaim the land for him.
 - b. This relative was called the **kinsman-redeemer**.
 - c. The Book of Ruth in the OT is the story of a kinsman-redeemer named *Boaz* who reclaimed Ruth's lost heritage.

10. In John's vision of God's throne room in heaven, he sees God holding a title deed. To what? Vs.2-4

² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"

1. As an aside, John says this angel was "strong."
 - a. Which leads us to conclude; they're not all the same.
 - b. The angels are not like the Clone Army in Star Wars.
 - c. They're different. And THIS angel was **strong** compared to others; ripped, yoked. It's nickname was "Arnold."
2. Not only was it strong, it had a **loud**, literally "**mega**" voice.
 - a. John didn't say, "What was that?" to this angel.
 - b. The message was loud and clear. It's a proclamation **to all creation**; a challenge "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"
3. In other words: Who **qualifies** to meet the terms **on the outside** & take possession of what's written **on the inside**?

³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

4. As John waits, **no one** steps forward.
 - a. No angel is worthy.
 - b. The cherubim aren't worthy; nor any of the 24 elders.
 - c. No one on Earth qualifies.
 - d. There's a long, awkward pause, & John finally realizes no one's answering the challenge.
 - e. Because he knows what's at stake, he's undone

⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

5. John is shattered because he knows that scroll is the title deed **to Earth**.
 - a. God gave dominion of Earth to Adam in the Garden.
 - b. Adam **forfeited** dominion in the Fall, yielding it up to the devil.
 - c. That's why 2 Cor. 4:4. calls Satan the "god of this world."
6. Consider this: When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, Satan offered Him mastery of Earth if He'd just bow down & worship him,
 - 1) Jesus didn't deny Satan's possession of the kingdoms of man.
 - 2) The **force of the temptation** lay in the fact that the offer **was real!**
 - 3) Jesus' mission as the Messiah was to reclaim man's lost dominion.
 - 4) The devil offered Jesus a shortcut to His goal.
 - 5) Why go the hard way of the Cross? Just bow and all would be His.
 - 6) Of course it was a lie & Jesus didn't fall for it.

7. Here in John's vision, he realizes the time has come to settle the issue of the dominion of Earth once and for all.

- a. Humanity has fallen into a debt of sin & rebellion it can't repay.
- b. The challenge goes out – and no one steps forward.
- c. The Jeopardy song is playing; coming to the last notes.
- d. Despair sweeps over John.
- e. Then, at the last second – Hope!

Vs.5-7

⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

1. One of the 24 elders tells John to cease **sobbing**; & **that's** what it was.
 - a. The word in vs4&5 doesn't refer to a single tear that slips out of John's eye and makes its way slowly

- down an otherwise stoic countenance.
- b. John was sobbing! The tears **flowed** down his trembling cheeks.
2. But just in the nick of time, at the last second, one of the elders tells him there **was** someone who qualified to take the scroll.
 3. He's the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; the Root of David.
 - a. These were titles for the Messiah, well-known to every Jew.
 - b. There were many prophecies in the OT about the Messiah.
 - 1) It was foretold He'd be a ruler from the Tribe of Judah. [Gen 49:8-10]
 - 2) It was declared He'd come from David's line. [Isa 1:1,10]
 4. Of course, as one of the original disciples, John knew **Jesus** was a descendant of David's & of the Tribe of Judah.
 - a. He knew Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah.
 - b. It's **here** the **reality** of **Who** Jesus is & the **magnitude** of what He did comes home to John.
 5. The elder announces Christ has **prevailed!** He's won.
 - a. He meets the qualifications to reclaim what Adam lost.
 - b. The days of Earth's bondage to the curse & Humanity's slavery to sin are about to end.
 - c. Jesus is our great kinsman-redeemer, Who came to reclaim us.
 - d. He paid our debt at the cross.
 - e. And now the time has come for Him to take possession of what by rights belongs to Him.
 6. John turns to the throne to witness the glorious event.
 7. What he sees is not what he expected . . .
- ⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.
8. John expects to see the **Lion** of the Tribe of Judah. What he sees is a **lamb**.
 - a. And not just any lamb. This isn't Mary's nursery rhyme Lamb.
 - b. This lamb bears the marks of sacrifice.
 9. In that time, sheep were used almost exclusively for two things; wool & sacrifice.
 - a. Inordinately rare was the man, woman, boy, or girl that hadn't seen a lamb sacrificed.
 - b. So there was no shock or surprise in going to the market or temple.
 10. But what John saw in here was **totally unexpected**.
 - a. He thought he was going to see a Lion King. What he sees is a lamb.
 - 1) The word he uses speaks of a **little** lamb; the kind children make a **pet** out of.
 - 2) This isn't just livestock; a piece of productive property.
 - 3) This is a **precious** lamb that eats at your table, plays w/your kids, & sleeps w/the family.
 - b. Seeing **that** lamb w/the marks of a sacrificial knife are too much.
 11. All of this finds its origin in the Passover.
 - a. God told the people of Israel they were to select a young lamb & bring it into their home days BEFORE Passover.
 - b. It was to live w/them for a while before they offered it.
 - c. God wanted them to understand this as a picture of the **Real** Passover Lamb, the Messiah;
 - d. Who as God's Son offered Himself for the sins of the world & made possible their release from bondage to sin & death.
 12. Now, as John stands in heaven & sees the Lamb, he remembers the **very first day** he met Jesus.
 - a. He was John the Baptizer's disciple before he was Jesus'.
 - b. They were baptizing in the Jordan River when one day John **the Baptizer** pointed at Jesus & said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."
 - c. That's when the **Apostle** John started following Jesus.
 13. Then, a little over three yrs later, John stood at the foot of the cross & watched as the blood flowed from Christ's wounds.
 - a. He heard Jesus say, "Father forgive them. They know not what they do."
 - b. Then finally, "It is finished=**Paid!**"

14. Jesus **is** worthy to take the scroll & loose its seals because He paid the price for our sins.
 - a. As Col. 2:14 says, He satisfied the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.
 - b. He's met the terms on the *outside* of the scroll.
 - c. The scroll, and what its contents describe, belong to Him.
 - d. Jesus is the *Second Adam* who instead of failing, did it right & now has the right to redeem man & reclaim humanity's lost dominion.
 15. John describes the lamb having 7 horns & eyes.
 - a. That puts a different spin on the Lamb than as a pet or sacrifice.
 - b. In fact; far from being a pet; a 7-eyed sheep sounds like circus sideshow attraction.
 16. As we read John's description of what he saw in heaven, we do occasionally encounter some bizarre stuff.
 - a. At first blush they can seem odd to the point of monstrous.
 - b. Let's be honest; a 7 horned & eyed bloody sheep doesn't make us go "Ohhh – isn't that cute?"
 - c. It can SEEM, well – repulsive! >> SO keep this in mind ...
 - d. Permeating, saturating all John sees is the glory emanating from God's throne.
 - e. Note carefully WHERE Jesus as the Lamb is;
 - 1) He's standing **next to** God's Throne.
 - 2) He's between the throne & cherubim.
 - f. So, as John DESCRIBES this for us, the image **seems** bizarre.
 - g. But **John** did NOT regard it that way.
 - h. Bathed as it was in the radiant glory of God, it was perfect!
 17. So, let's consider it from THAT perspective. > **Why** does the Lamb have 7 horns & eyes.
 - a. 7 is the number of perfection; completion & is used many times in Revelation which tells of the completion of God's Plan.
 - b. Horns are used repeated in the OT as symbols of civil power.
 - c. Eyes speak of intelligence / awareness.
 18. John sees Jesus as a Lamb with 7 horns because He's the King of kings.
He possesses all power – He's **omnipotent**.
 19. He has 7 eyes; He's **omniscient**.
 20. The eyes are the 7 spirits of God sent into all the Earth, because Jesus is **omnipresent**.
 21. The Bottom line is this: Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world is both God & Man.
- CONCLUSION • Lion & Lamb
1. As we end, take careful note of the paradox here.
 2. The elder calls Jesus a Lion but John sees a Lamb.
 3. A lion speaks of kingly majesty, power, authority.
 4. A lamb is lowly & humble
 - a. The lion is predator > the lamb, prey.
 - b. The lion is the top of the food chain > the lamb is the bottom.
 - c. The lion is fierce & fearless > the lamb is meek.
 - d. The lion rules > the lamb submits.
 - e. The lion roars > the lamb bleats.
 5. Jesus is **both** the Lion of the Tribe of Judah & the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.
 6. There is in His Lion the **character** of a Lamb, & in His Lamb, the **nature** of a Lion.
 - a. He is the Lamb who roars.
 - b. The first time Jesus came, He came as a lamb to reclaim man's lost dominion by going to the cross as the ultimate & final sacrifice.
 - c. Now that dominion has been reclaimed, He'll return as the Lion to take possession of what belongs to Him.

What it Means for Us

1. Here's what all this means for us.
2. We live **between** the Lamb Who **came** & the Lion Who's **coming**.
3. This vision John had is yet future.
4. The day of final redemption when Jesus takes the Title Deed to Earth isn't yet; but it's coming.
5. As we hear the news of ISIS & their reign of terror,

- a. As we watch the world slipping into a chaos of political confusion,
 - b. As the economies of one nation after another crash,
 - c. And conflicts like what's going on in Eastern Ukraine multiply,
 - d. As the Apocalyptic regime in Iran keeps on in its nuclear program despite international pressure
6. It's easy to despair; to lament as John did when it seemed no one was going to take the scroll from God's hand.
 7. John's despair was turned to worship when He saw The Lamb Who is a Lion.
 8. Let's keep our eyes on Jesus.