

Group Time Sharing Questions

QUESTION ONE: John weeps because “no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it” (5:3). Why is no creature “worthy” to do so?

Hints for answering this question:

1. What does the scroll resemble? (Read Ex. 32:15)
2. What does the document in Ex. 32:15 represent?
3. What do you think the scroll represent?
4. Now read John 4:25 and Matthew 13:35.
5. If the New is hidden in the Old, who do you think is capable of revealing the New? Why?
6. What did this person do that allowed him to enter into or reveal the scroll?

QUESTION TWO: Read Leviticus 26:3-5, 21-26. To what blessings and curses does Israel bind itself in the oath that seals the Mosaic covenant? Do you see any relationship between the binding curses of the Mosaic covenant and the affliction and calamities of the 7 seals, the 7 trumpets, and the 7 bowls?

PERSONAL REFLECTION: As the heavenly liturgy continues to unfold in Revelation 4, the chapter begins with the command “Come up hither!” In other words, God pulls John up to heaven rather than stooping down to John. What does this signify about the nature of our participation in the liturgy? Also, John tells us he was “in the Spirit”. We are “in the Spirit” if we are in a state of grace. What does the realization of this do to our perception of our participation in an ordinary mass? Where are we when we are celebrating mass according to Scripture and CCC #1136?

Q1	<p>John weeps because “no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it” (5:3). Why is no creature “worthy” to do so?</p> <p>Hints for answering this question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does the scroll resemble? (Read Ex. 32:15) 2. What does the document in Ex. 32:15 represent? 3. What do you think the scroll represent? 4. Now read John 4:25 and Matthew 13:35. 5. If the New is hidden in the Old, who do you think is capable of revealing the New? Why? 6. What did this person do that allowed him to enter into or reveal the scroll? 	
Rev 5:3	³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to examine it.	³ 但是，不論在天上、地上、或地下，沒有一個能展開那書卷的，沒有能閱讀它的。
Ex. 32:15	¹⁵ Moses then turned and came down the mountain with the two tablets of the commandments in his hands, tablets that were written on both sides, front and back;	¹⁵ 梅瑟轉身下山，手中拿著兩塊約版，版兩面都寫著字，前面後面都有字。
John 4:25	²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Anointed; when he comes, he will tell us everything." <u>Note:</u> [25] The expectations of the Samaritans are expressed here in Jewish terminology. They did not expect a messianic king of the house of David but a prophet like Moses (<i>Deut 18:15</i>).	²⁵ 婦人說：「我知道默西亞——意即基督——要來，祂一來了，必會告訴我們一切。」
Matthew 13:35	³⁵ to fulfill what had been said through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation (of the world)." <u>Note:</u> [35] The prophet: some textual witnesses read "Isaiah the prophet." The quotation is actually from <i>Psalms 78:2</i> ; the first line corresponds to the LXX text of the psalm. The psalm's title ascribes it to Asaph, the founder of one of the guilds of temple musicians. He is called "the prophet" (NAB "the seer") in <i>2 Chron 29:30</i> but it is doubtful that Matthew averted to that; for him, any Old Testament text that could be seen as fulfilled in Jesus was prophetic.	³⁵ 這樣應驗了先知所說的話：『我要開口說比喻，要說出由創世以來的隱密事。』

Q2	Read Leviticus 26:3-5, 21-26. To what blessings and curses does Israel bind itself in the oath that seals the Mosaic covenant? Do you see any relationship between the binding curses of the Mosaic covenant and the affliction and calamities of the 7 seals, the 7 trumpets, and the 7 bowls?	
Leviticus 26:3-5	<p>³ "If you live in accordance with my precepts and are careful to observe my commandments, ⁴ I will give you rain in due season, so that the land will bear its crops, and the trees their fruit; ⁵ your threshing will last till vintage time, and your vintage till the time for sowing, and you will have food to eat in abundance, so that you may dwell securely in your land.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> [3-45] Since God's covenant was with the Israelite nation as a whole, these promises and threats are made primarily to the entire community. The rewards and punishments are of a temporal nature because the community as such exists only here on earth, not in the hereafter.</p>	<p>³如果你們履行我得法令，遵守我的命令，一一依照執行，⁴我必按時給你們降下雨露，地必供給出產，田野的樹木必結出果實。⁵你們打禾必打到收葡萄的時期，收葡萄必收到播種的時期；你們必有糧食吃飽，在境內安居樂業。</p>
Leviticus 26:21-26	<p>²¹ "If then you become defiant in your unwillingness to obey me, I will multiply my blows another sevenfold, as your sins deserve. ²² I will unleash the wild beasts against you, to rob you of your children and wipe out your livestock, till your population dwindles away and your roads become deserted. ²³ "If, with all this, you still refuse to be chastened by me and continue to defy me, ²⁴ I, too, will defy you and will smite you for your sins seven times harder than before. ²⁵ I will make the sword, the avenger of my covenant, sweep over you. Though you then huddle together in your walled cities, I will send in pestilence among you, till you are forced to surrender to the enemy. ²⁶ And as I cut off your supply of bread, ten women will need but one oven for baking all the bread they dole out to you in rations - not enough food to still your hunger.</p>	<p>²¹如果你們還與我作對，不願聽從我，我必按照你們的罪惡，加重七倍打擊你們，²²使野獸來傷害你們，奪去你們的子女，殘害你們的牲畜，減少你們的人口，使你們的街市變成廢墟。²³如果我用這些事還不能懲戒你們，你們仍然與我作對，²⁴我也要與你們作對，爲了你們的罪惡，必要加重七倍打擊你們。²⁵我必令刀劍臨於你們，爲報復違背盟約的罪；如果你們退入城市，我必使瘟疫來害你們，叫你們落在仇人手內。²⁶當我給你們斷絕了糧源時，十個女人要在了一口灶上烤餅，按定量給你們配給糧食；你們雖然吃，卻吃不飽。</p>

- http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_INDEX.HTM
- <http://www.catholic.org.tw/bible/index.htm>
- <http://www.cathlinks.org/ccc-toc.htm>
- <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/ccc.html>

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ANSWERS:

QUESTION ONE (answer summarized from B3/6 of handout):

Like the Ten Commandments, the scroll has writing on both sides (see Exodus 32:15). Therefore the scroll symbolizes the Old Covenant, which can only be “revealed” or entered into by Jesus.

This is why John 4:25 says when Jesus comes “he will show us all things”. Similarly, Matthew 13:35 says, he “will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world”.

Jesus opens the scroll in the sense that he “cracks open” the secrets of the New Testament that are hidden in the Old Testament. This is exactly what he does on the Emmaus Road when “beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself”. (Luke 24:27)

Jesus also opens the scroll and fulfills the Old Covenant by virtue of his death and resurrection, which nobody else can do.

QUESTION TWO (answer summarized from B3/8 of handout):

The readings from Leviticus 26 indicate that by entering into a covenant with the Israelites, God promises both blessings and curses. If they observe God’s commandment, they will receive great blessings. If they don’t, God will chastise them sevenfold for their sins. The affliction and calamities of the seven seals, 7 trumpets, and 7 bowls reflect the promised sevenfold punishments for Jerusalem. The opening of the seals let loose conquest and sword, famine, death, beasts and pestilence (Rev 6:4-8) – same as the punishments promised in Lev 26:22-29.