

KEEP THY HEART

A Bible-Based Devotional

Turn to: **Revelation 5**
“The Toughest Job Posting”

Have you ever wondered which job has been most difficult, or which application process has been most strict? Which position requires the most training, experience, courage, or other qualities? I believe that today, we will find out.

1: The job posting (v1-2). God is the Interviewer for this job, as He has the book **in His right hand** of strength. What is this book? We see that it has writing **within and on the backside**, meaning that some of the writing was visible to everyone, even without breaking the seals and opening the scroll. Similarly, God's Word contains a lot of writing that is directed toward lost people, which they can understand even before really "opening the book" and getting saved. All of this writing on both sides also indicates that it was full, with nothing to add (Revelation 22:18-19). Apparently, wills and title deeds in that day were **sealed with seven seals**; I imagine these seals as being all on the outside, so this scroll (i.e., book) would not open until all seven were removed.

(v2) Imagine this **strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice** the serious challenge, presented to everyone. Anyone can apply for this job. The first qualification is that you must be **worthy to open the book**; in one sense, we're not worthy even to have the Bible, yet God has given it to us. And qualification #2 is that you must be worthy to **loose the seals thereof**, meaning you need to be a person of great rank, as breaking a royal seal is a big deal (which is why they put a seal on Jesus' tomb, Matthew 27:65-66).

2: The denied applicants (v3-4). Those who fail to meet these qualifications include all **men** who are **in heaven**, such as the 24 elders and the 144 thousand. Unworthy are Abraham, Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, Paul, Peter, Mary, or James, or even John the apostle. This job posting is met by silence by the entire human race in the one place you might hope to find qualified candidates—heaven.

But no man **in earth** qualifies either; not the most powerful tyrant, the greatest tycoon, the most successful actor or actress, the war generals and strategists; not kings, congressmen and congresswomen, or anyone else alive met these qualifications. And finally, no person **under the earth**, or dead and in hell, met these qualifications. In fact, no human anywhere even scored close to matching just the first qualification, because they couldn't **look thereon**, let read or **open** it. Have you ever had to turn your gaze from something because it was so bright, like the sun or a bright light bulb? This book was so glorious and pure that no one could bring themselves even to gaze on it, feeling shame for their own unworthiness by comparison.

(v4) When **John wept much**, I think he cried violently and shook. He already knew he was unworthy, but now, it hits him as never before. There's a big difference between knowing that something is true and really understanding it in your heart. I think it would do us good to really contemplate how unworthy we really are, and to let it hit us emotionally as it did John. Do you think of yourself as a spiritual "hot shot"? I think even the most spiritual people on earth would feel completely unworthy in the presence of Jesus Christ (Daniel 10:8, Isaiah 6:5).

3: The hire (v5-14). **One of the elders**, who must understand how John felt, being a fellow human being, comes to comfort him. He says to **weep not**; God and God's people seem to be always comforting contrite hearts (Psalm 34:18). Though *we* are unworthy, there is good news! Jesus Christ is a **Lion**, meaning He has the strength and ability to loose these seals; but does He have the legal right to do so? Yes, because He is **of the tribe of Juda**. Was Satan able to disqualify Him? No, because He **hath prevailed** against temptation, death, hell, sin, flattery, and all of Satan's other traps.

(v6) With tears probably still in his eyes, John tries to see, and he **beheld, and lo**—Jesus offered Himself to God **in the midst of the throne**, in a sense, as a sacrifice for sin; it was **in the midst of the elders**, who were thankful for His death so they could be in heaven, in stark contrast to the earthly elders who killed Him out of envy. I wonder if John was confused to see a **Lamb** when the angel had just told him to look

for a Lion; yet the Lamb is a picture of Jesus' first coming, and it was Jesus' death specifically (**as it had been slain**) which gave Him the right to open this book. Perhaps the **seven horns** demonstrate His authority and power, while His **seven eyes** demonstrate His searching omniscience (Proverbs 15:3). We will see later that Jesus Christ is indeed a Lion also, and will come as such when He returns.

(v7) I imagine the Father fully released His grip on this **book** in full approval when the Son **took** it, as His wrath was satisfied completely at the cross of Jesus Christ. (v8) Can you picture the celebration in heaven as Jesus Christ passes all the qualifications? The music alone must have been incredible. The elders **had every one of them harps**, meaning, I think, that each elder had multiple harps, probably each one different than the other.

And I love it how our **prayers** are stored in **vials of gold**, not in copper or tin; God treasures the prayers of His saints. It's interesting also how our prayers are frequently compared to **odours**. If we turn back to Exodus 30:34-38, we will see that the perfume for the tabernacle had to be mixed a certain way, with equal and precise quantities of each substance. How do our prayers "smell" to God? I know oftentimes I spend too much time asking God for things rather than praising Him. I think that ideally, we should have a balanced prayer "recipe," following the basic outline and "weights" of ingredients as found in the Lord's Prayer.

(v9) For this special occasion, a **new song** debuts (Psalm 33:3); this occasion deserves the best! Interestingly, what gave Jesus the qualifications to open the scroll was the meekness of a Lamb—**for thou wast slain**—not so much the strength of the Lion, though that part will qualify Him for what is coming later in Revelation. There seems to be a sweet parallel between **Jesus' blood** and ours (**kindred, people**); in other words, instead of being separate **tongues** or **nations**, all Christians, no matter what their nationality, are "blood brothers" to Jesus Christ and to each other, not just by adoption (Galatians 4:5), but by birth (John 3:3).

(v10) The cool thing about Jesus is that He loves to share His success and prosperity with

His saints, going so far as to make us **unto our God kings and priests**. Our reign as Christians will be **on the earth**: a literal, physical reign, with physical jobs and real work and real joy and excitement.

(v11) The number of angels, plus the four beasts and twenty-four elders, who are gathered at this throne to praise God is over **ten thousand times ten thousand** (100 million), with extra **thousands of thousands** (millions) in "spare change," so to speak—in other words, it is an absolutely massive crowd of angels. (v12) And all these people praised God **with a loud voice**; they didn't have the attitude of, "Yeah, sure"; they gave God fervent, genuine, heartfelt praise. They praise Jesus Christ as being worthy to receive **power**, which we could compare to a sword, as He is in charge; **riches**, like gold and silver, both physical and spiritual (Luke 16:11); **wisdom** to know how to decide in specific situations as they come up; **strength**, like muscle to swing the sword; **honour**, like high rank, or like a purple heart of valor; and **blessing**, or favor and heartfelt approval by us to Jesus Christ as our King.

(v13) And who echoes this chorus? **Every creature which is in heaven**, including all of the other Christians, or maybe even other angels who aren't in this particular crowd (perhaps on errands) but who hear and echo this massive praise from afar. And not only that, but every creature **on the earth**, like birds and reptiles and bears and cougars; **and under the earth**, including those even in hell; and **such as are in the sea**, including whales and dolphins and fish and eels and stingrays and starfish (see Luke 19:40), echo this praise. Even those who adamantly reject Jesus Christ today will confess Him one day (Philippians 2:11). (v14) This incredible ceremony apparently comes to a regal close with **the four beasts** saying, "**Amen**", and **the four and twenty elders** falling down completely (not just half-bowing) one last time.

Let's praise Jesus Christ for His love in dying for us; without His great sacrifice, we would all be doomed. The job He fulfilled in providing salvation for us was one that truly no one else in the universe could have done.