

Revelation Of Jesus Christ Study 27

Rev 4:8-11

8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

As we continue to look at the vision John is having and is sharing with the Churches we remember that he first talks about the Throne he saw, and then the One sitting on the throne, and then what was around the throne, and what was coming from the throne, followed by what was before the throne, and what was in and around the throne, all of these have given a picture of heaven and preparations for God to come and judge the earth. God is loving, merciful, gracious, holy, righteous, and just. It takes a balance to fully see all that He is.

To often that balance is not seen in the preaching of many, it often gets all narrowed down to just His love and mercy and so then folks forget that He will judge sin.

Something we should never forget. **Sin will be judged** and that is just as true as that God loves us.

Toward The Throne

Rev 4:8b-11

And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

Fittingly, the scene in heaven culminates in worship directed toward God on His throne.

In this passage and in *chapter 5* are five great hymns of praise, during the singing of which the size of the choir gradually increases.

The hymns of praise begin *in verse 8* with a quartet, the four living creatures. In *verse 10*, the twenty-four elders join in, and in *5:8* harps are added to the vocal praise.

The angels add their voices in *5:11*. Finally, in *5:13*, all created beings in the universe join in the mighty chorus of praise to God.

Worship is reserved for God alone, since there is no one in the universe like Him.

David prayed;

1 Chron 17:20

20 O LORD, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

Psa 86:8-10

8 Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord; Nor are there any works like Your works. 9 All nations whom You have made Shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And shall glorify Your name. 10 For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God.

Psa 89:6-8

6 For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD? 7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him. 8 O LORD God of hosts, Who is mighty like You, O LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.

This mighty oratorio of praise and worship may be divided into two movements:

The hymn of creation (*chapt 4*)

And the hymn of redemption (*chapt 5*)

The hymn of creation, the first movement, may be divided into several elements.

God's Holiness

The four living creatures begin the oratorio of worship by focusing on God's holiness:

Day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God."

The threefold repetition of holy is also found in Isaiah;

Isa 6:1-4

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" 4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

Holiness is only one of God's attributes so repeated, since it is the summation of all that He is.

God's holiness is His utter and complete separation from evil in any and every form. He is absolutely untainted by any evil, error, or wrongdoing, unlike angels (some of which sinned) or humans (all of which sinned).

Hannah declared;

1 Sam 2:1-2

1 And Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the LORD; My horn is exalted in the LORD. I smile at my enemies, Because I rejoice in Your salvation. 2 "No one is holy like the LORD, For there is none besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God.

God alone is "*majestic in holiness*"

Exodus 15:11

11 "Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious (majestic) in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

The prophet Habakkuk praised God listen;

Hab 1:13

13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.

The Psalmist declares;

Psa 47:8

8 God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.

Psa 111:9

Holy and awesome is His name.

Here in Rev however the praise is for God's holiness specifically exhibited through judgment.

Being holy, God hates sin, and pours out His wrath on it.

Job said to his would be counselors;

Job 13:11

11 Will not His excellence make you afraid, And the dread of Him fall upon you?

Now listen God, because of His grace and mercy, refrains from worldwide judgment on all sinners, as they deserve.

But in the future time of Tribulation, the opportunity for mercy and grace will be past, and the sinful, rebellious world will feel the full fury of God's wrath.

So terrifying will that time be that unrepentant sinners will cry "*the the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us and hid us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand.*" (Rev 6:16-17)

His Power

Not only is God's holiness cause for worship, but also His power;

Rev 4:8

8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"

In their song of praise, the four living creatures refer to God as **the Almighty**, a title by which God identified Himself to Abraham;

Gen 17:1

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless"

That term identifies God as the strongest, most powerful being, utterly devoid of any weakness, whose conquering power and over-powering strength none can oppose.

Because God is Almighty, He can effortlessly do whatever His holy will purposes to do;

Isa 40:28

The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary.

Job said, in the midst of his trials:

Job 9:19

¹⁹ If it is a matter of strength, indeed He is strong;

And how about Nebuchadnezzar after experiencing God's devastating and humiliating judgment;

Dan 4:34-35

³⁴ And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation. ³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

David declares:

1 Chron 29:11-12

¹¹ Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all. ¹² Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all.

His Eternity

So here in Revelation He is worshiped for His Holiness and for His Power, but that's not all. The four living creatures also praise God for His eternity, extolling Him as He "**who was and who is and who is to come,**"

Rev 10:6

⁵ The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven ⁶ and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer,

Rev 15:7

⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever

Dan 4:34

34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

The Scriptures repeatedly affirms God's eternity, that He transcends time, having neither beginning nor ending (*Psa 90:2; 93:2; 102:24-27; Isa 57:15; Mic 5:2; Hab 1:12; 1 Tim 1:17; 6:15-16*)

That sets Him apart from animals, who have a beginning and an ending, and angels and humans, who had a beginning, but will have no ending.

The know that God is eternal provides comfort for His children, since, unlike a human father, He will always be there to take care of them.

God's eternity guarantees that our eternal life in heaven will never cease, that we will receive *"an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison (2 Cor 4:17)*

It also means that the punishment of the wicked in hell will last forever, that their weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth will never cease, that *"the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever" (Rev 14:11)*

Such destruction of sinners is a vindication of the righteousness of God.

The praise of the four living creatures, as they **give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne**, triggers a response from the **twenty-four elders**. They **will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever**.

This is the first of six times that the elders prostrate themselves before God;

(5:8, 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4)

Such posture is one of reverential worship, a natural response to the majestic holy awe-inspiring glory of God (*Gen 17:3; Josh 5:14; Ezek 1:28; 3:23; 43:3; 44:4; Matt 17:6; Acts 9:4*)

Amazingly, after prostrating themselves the twenty-four elders **cast their crowns before the throne**.

They are not preoccupied with their own excellence. They are not concerned about their own holiness, honor, or reward. All those things pale into insignificance and become meaningless in the light of the glory of God.

The elders add their own note to the chorus of praise initiated by the four living beings, crying out;

Rev 4:11

11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

The word **"worthy"** Axios, was used of the Roman emperor when he marched in a triumphal procession.

The focus of the elders' song is on God's glory manifested in creation;

He is presented as Creator throughout Scripture (*Rev 10:6; Gen 1:1; Exod 20:11; Isa 40:26, 28; Jer 10:10-12; 32:17; Col 1:16*).

The elders are acknowledging that God has the right both to redeem and to judge His creation. Their song anticipates paradise lost becoming paradise regained.

This first movement of the oratorio of praise pictures God about to judge Satan, demons, and sinners and take back His creation. Both the living creatures and the twenty-four elders can only worship in awe and wonder as God prepares to bring about the glorious day of which Paul wrote:

Rom 8:19-22

¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.