

## Revelation Of Jesus Christ Study 29

*Rev 5:8-14*

<sup>8</sup> Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, <sup>10</sup> And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." <sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup> saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" <sup>13</sup> And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" <sup>14</sup> Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

The appearance of the Lamb as He moves to take the scroll causes praise to break out from everywhere in the universe.

The praise accelerates in an ascending crescendo of worship as the oratorio of redemption reaches its climax.

To the two majestic doxologies of *chapter 4* are added three more in *chapter 5*.

The spontaneous out bursts of worship results from the realization that the long-anticipated defeat of sin, death, and Satan is about to triumph and establish His glorious millennial kingdom.

The curse will be reversed, the believing remnant of Israel will be saved, and the church will be honored, exalted, and granted the privilege of reigning with Christ.

All of the pent up anticipation of millennia finally bursts out at the prospect of what is about to take place.

As they began their song of praise and worship, **the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.**

That they offer the same praise and worship to Christ that they did to the Father in *chapter 4:10* offers convincing proof of Christ's deity, since only God is to be worshiped;

*Rev 19-10; Matt 4:10*

<sup>10</sup> And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'

After Jesus accomplished redemption by bearing sin on the cross, God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to His right hand.

Jesus received back the glory He had had in the Father's presence before the world began.

*John 17:5*

*5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

To the Ephesians Paul wrote of Christ with these words,

*Eph 1:20-22*

*20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. 22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

Even though Christ is exalted to the Father's right hand, Jesus Christ is not yet fully reigning.

*Psa 2:6-12*

*6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.*

Dr Donald Gray Barnhouse once observed that there are four things out of place in the universe:

*"The Church which should be in heaven*

*Israel, which should be living in peace occupying all the land promised to her;*

*Satan, who belongs in the lake of fire;*

*And Christ, who should be seated on His throne reigning.*

*All four of these anomalies will be set right when Christ takes the scroll from His Father's hand."*

But before He begins to unroll it in Chapter 6 comes the song of praise and worship,

John noticed that **each one** of the twenty-four elders was **holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.**

(the grammatical structure of the Greek text seems to indicate that it was only the elders, not the living creatures, who held those two items.)

**Harp**s were frequently associated in the Old Testament with worship;

*2 Sam 6:5*

*5 Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals.*

*1 Chron 15:16, 28*

*16 Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy.*

*28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.*

**They also were linked closely with Prophecy.**

*1 Sam 10:5*

*5 After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying.*

When about to prophecy Elisha said;

*2 Kings 3:15*

*15 But now bring me a musician." Then it happened, when the musician played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.*

The harps in the hands of the elders probably symbolize all of prophecy, which culminates in the momentous events about to take place.

In addition to the harps the elders held **the golden bowls of incense.**

**These wide mouthed bowls were used in the tabernacle and the temple in worship;**

*1 Kings 7:40, 45, 50*

*40 Hiram made the lavers and the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing all the work that he was to do for King Solomon for the house of the LORD:*

*45 the pots, the shovels, and the bowls. All these articles which Hiram made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD were of burnished bronze.*

*50 the basins, the trimmers, the bowls, the ladles, and the censers of pure gold; and the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner room (the Most Holy Place) and for the doors of the main hall of the temple*

*2 Kings 12:13-14*

*13 However there were not made for the house of the LORD basins of silver, trimmers, sprinkling-bowls, trumpets, any articles of gold or articles of silver, from the money brought into the house of the LORD. <sup>14</sup> But they gave that to the workmen, and they repaired the house of the LORD with it.*

*Jer 52:19*

*19 The basins, the firepans, the bowls, the pots, the lampstands, the spoons, and the cups, whatever was solid gold and whatever was solid silver, the captain of the guard took away.*

*So the bowls have to do with worship, and carrying the incense, or prayers of the saints down through the ages that God's prophesied and promised redemption of the earth might come.*

Taken together the harps and bowls indicate that all that the prophets ever prophesied and all that God's children ever prayed for is finally to be fulfilled.

As the elders brought before God the desires and prayers of the Saints, **they sang a new song.**

As the elders come before the throne with a new song; it is they that are singing not the angels or cherubim, or living creatures;

We must adopt the variant reading found in many manuscripts;

*"You.. have redeemed us to God,"* as the New King James Version does, further reinforces that point, since the four living creatures and Holy Angels have no need of redemption.

This is consistent with the rest of scripture, which pictures the redeemed singing praise to God.

*Psa 7:17; 9:2; 61:8; 104:33; 146:2*

*17 I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness, And will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.*

*2 I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.*

*8 So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may daily perform my vows.*

*33 I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.*

*2 While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.*

*Neh 12:46*

*46 For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chiefs of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God*

The song opens with the reaffirmation that Christ is **worthy to take the book and to break its seals.**

He is worthy because he is the **Lamb**, the lion of the tribe of Judah, and the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

To break the seals means to enact the judgments written in it.

Then further reinforcing Christ's worthiness, the song continues, **for you were slain and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.**

That phrase elaborates on the statement of verse 6 that the Lamb had been slain, explaining the significance of His death.

It was Christ's, substitutionary, sacrificial death that **purchased for God, men from every tribe, and tongue and people and nation.**

**Purchased** is from the word *agorazo*, a rich new testament word for redemption that pictures slaves purchased in the marketplace and then set free.

At the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ paid the purchase price (His own **blood**; )

*1Pet 1:18-19*

*18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

He redeemed man;

From every tribe (decent)

From every tongue (language)

From every nation (culture)

No one was left out of the great sacrifice.

*Gal 3:13*

*13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),*

*1 Cor 6:20; 7:23*

*20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

*23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.*

It must have been a thrilling, exhilarating realization for John that the redeemed would one day include people from all over the world.

In a day when the church was small, isolated, struggling, and sinful, John must have been concerned about its future.

Especially because of the seven churches addressed in *chapters 2-3* that had such serious and potentially fatal problems.

The knowledge that persecution and sin would not extinguish the spreading flame of Christianity must have brought joy and hope to the apostle's heart

The song now moves on to express the results of redemption:

The use of the word *them* here instead of *us* indicates the vastness and comprehensiveness of redemption.

The twenty-four elders move beyond themselves to sweep up all the saints of all the ages into their song of praise and adoration.

The redeemed are a part of God's **kingdom** (*1:6*), a community of believers under God's sovereign rule.

They are also **Priests to our God** (*20:6*), signifying their complete access to God's presence for worship and service.

The present priesthood of believers;

*1 Pet 2:5, 9*

*<sup>5</sup> you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*

*<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

Foreshadows that future day when we will have total access to and perfect communion with God.

During the millennial kingdom, believers **will reign upon the earth** with Christ

*Rev 20:6; 2Tim 2:12*

*<sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

*<sup>12</sup> If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

In *verse 11* John says for the fourth time in the chapter that he saw something.

As he looked he heard;

*Rev 5:11*

*<sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,*

*Dan 7:10*

*<sup>10</sup> A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.*

To the voices of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders are now added those of innumerable angels.

The phrase **myriads and myriads** describes an uncountable host. Myriad means ten thousand,

*Heb 12:1*

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*

We know that the number of the angels cannot be counted, and that they are twice as many as the fallen angels (demons)

*Rev 12:3-4*

*<sup>3</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. <sup>4</sup> His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.*

This vast host began saying, with a **loud voice**, (*Neh 9:4; Psa 33:3 [shout] Psa 98:4 [shout]*)

The familiar doxology;

*"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."*

Once again, the emphasis is on Christ's death providing a perfect redemption, because of which He must be given worship, praise, and adoration.

He is worthy to receive recognition because of His **power and omnipotence.**

He is worthy to receive recognition because of the spiritual **riches that He possesses**

He owns everything (*Psa 50:10-12*)

He is worthy to receive recognition because of His **wisdom and omniscience.**

For all these things and all His other absolute perfections, Jesus Christ is worthy of all **honor and glory and blessing.**

As the great hymn of praise reaches a crescendo, **every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them** joins in.

*Remember Psa 69:34*

*34 Let heaven and earth praise Him, The seas and everything that moves in them.*

*Psa 150:6*

*6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!*

This mighty chorus cries out **"to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."**

**Endless blessings,**

**Endless honor,**

**Endless praise,**

**Endless glory,**

**Endless worship belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

The creation is unable to contain its joy over its imminent redemption

*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.*

Lost in wonder, love, and praise, the four living creatures could only keep saying, **"Amen."** That solemn affirmation means **"let it be," or "make it happen"**

And **the elders fell down** once again **and worshiped.**

Soon, this mighty host would march out of heaven to execute judgment, gather the elect, and return with Christ when He sets up His earthly kingdom. **The stage is set.**