



The Activity of Worship

by Pastor Steve

There is one aspect of the worship John witnessed in heaven that we would be amiss to neglect. Heaven's worship is loud. No where in the Revelation of Jesus Christ do you read that anyone silently worshiped. According to John's account the worship was so loud at times it would have been difficult to hear anything else. At times the volume of worship was determined by the sheer number of worshipers. However, most of the time we find that the worshipers were worshipping loudly.

Before we get too far into this let me qualify the thoughts I want to convey. First of all, I don't believe that the volume of worship determines the sincerity of worship. Loud worship is only noise if the worshiper doesn't have a heart that is pursuing God. Secondly, I don't believe all worship has to be loud to be genuine worship. The Holy Spirit determines the "mood" of worship and sometimes a low key approach to the Father is on the menu. However, I do believe that worship is active and not passive. In other words true worshipers are participators not spectators. It's one thing to actually be in the game and another all together to be watching someone else play. The fact that heaven's worship is loud is most significant in the fact that the worshipers were actively involved in the exaltation of the One who sits on the throne and the Lamb.

Early on in Revelations we read of the elders playing harps, bowing and singing praise to the Lamb. In chapter 5 we read, *Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, 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!* (Revelation 5:11-12)

When we look at worship in the Revelation we are hard pressed to find an example of quiet or silent worship. Let's read about some of the heavenly worship services.

After these things I looked and behold a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb! All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen!

Revelation 7:9-12

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; ...

Revelation 14 2-3

After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!

Revelation 19:1

And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

Revelation 19:6

The Greek word translated loud in these versus is the word megas which means big or exceedingly great. We often used the word mega when describing something of great proportions. John shared that he heard the voice of a great multitude as the sound of many waters. Every time I read this passage Niagara Falls comes to mind. Some authorities say that an estimated 1,000,000 gallons of water flow over the falls per minute. That is the equivalent of about 834,000,000 pounds. Scientists say that every frequency in the sound spectrum can be heard simultaneously as the water crashes at the bottom of the falls. This phenomenon is called white noise, which is what I believe John described in his revelation.

There is no such thing as passive worship. Worship requires action; it is not a spectator sport. The word worship itself demands an active response. In the Old Testament the most common Hebrew word translated for

worship is shachah. This word means to depress or prostrate in homage or loyalty to God, to bow down or fall down flat. The most common Greek word for worship is proskuneo which means to kiss like a dog licking his master's hand, to fawn or crouch, to prostrate oneself in homage, to reverence or adore. Proskuneo is the word translated worship throughout the book of Revelations.

One who silently stands each Sunday with folded arms watching the band or choir has not entered in to worship. One who does not worship has not yet had a revelation of the One who sits on the throne and of the Lamb. When true revelation comes worship follows; it is a natural response. Jesus taught his disciples to pray that God's kingdom would come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. We can conclude that God's will is being done in heaven and that the worship taking place there is acceptable to him.

The good news is that in the future we will gather around God's throne with the four living creatures, the elders, multitude of angels and myriads of others to worship our King. The great news is we don't have to wait until the sweet by and by; we can experience heaven's worship and the manifest presence of God today. Let God's people on earth join the host of heaven and worship the One who sits on the throne and the Lamb.

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