



Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and
strength and honor and glory and praise!

Revelation 5:11-12

Heaven's Worship

with Pastor Steve

Worshiping God the Creator

The twenty-four elders introduced in Revelation 4 hold an enviable position in John's vision. Seated around the throne of God, they have access to the grandest revelations of the Creator and his Son. These revelations produce worship responses that only those who have intimate relationship with the King dare to offer. Their relationship with the King is evident for only those with such intimacy are given such access to the throne room.

It can be debated as to who exactly these elders are or what they may represent. Twelve is a number which represents completion. There were twelve patriarchs and also twelve disciples which equals twenty-four. Though I believe in their literal existence, I also believe the twenty-four elders represent the totality of the church in the presence of God.

Paul wrote the Ephesians, *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* . . . (Ephesians 2:4-6)

Because of God's great mercy and grace we are now seated with him in the heavenly places. We don't have to wait for the sweet by and by. Through Jesus we have established the proper relationship that has gained us access to the throne room and, more importantly, to the King. Like the twenty-four elders our response to his presence is uninhibited worship.

As we search through Revelations we find some other interesting facts about the twenty-four elders. In Revelation 5:8 the elders are portrayed with harps and golden bowls of incense (which are the prayers of the saints). They also sing a new song before the throne and the Lamb. Again, the elders represent the worshiping church; musically and vocally. They also have the privilege of offering petitions before God because of their intimate relationship with him. In Revelations 5:5 and 7:13 they give prophetic insight into the activity of heaven. From their position around the throne, these elders were given a divine revelation of God as "Creator of all things." In chapter four, as the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to God the twenty-four elders respond by saying, *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.*

Five times in Revelations it is stated that God is worthy to receive glory, honor and power. To give him glory, honor and power means that God alone deserves to have all eyes look to him, to be noted above all others and to be seen as valuable and precious. He is to be esteemed in the highest degree and to have all power and strength and to be power itself. In other instances glory, honor and power are mentioned along with thanksgiving, strength, wisdom, riches, blessing and might. To be worthy to receive something means there has been some action performed by the recipient. Why is God worthy? He created all things! Thus, he has met the requirements and is worthy to be worshiped.

The Greek word used here for created expresses the idea of proprietorship of the manufacturer. He fabricated or originally formed all things. By his will, (his determination, choice, purpose, volition, or decree) they exist. In other words by his determined choice and for his specific purpose he decreed the existence of all things. *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.* (Colossians 1:16-17)

In Psalm 148 all of creation is commanded to praise God because, *He commanded and they were created*. To participate in heaven's worship service we must join with the elders and the rest of creation in offering uninhibited praise and worship to our Creator.

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