

## **Heaven: A Place of Worship!**

Texts: Revelation 4-5

### **Introduction:**

My son and I, occasionally, like to watch Monster Trucks, crushing cars, doing all kinds of flips, catching air, donuts...etc. In fact, I took him to a "Monster Jam" event, several months ago, and ever since, he has become a big fan. And I have to confess, I enjoy the action, myself. There is something about seeing a Monster truck jump a ramp, catch some serious air, nearly flip over, and land back on its wheels, which is invigorating to the soul. I can't explain it, but we all have that sense, within us, where we like to be awed or "wowed" and amazed. It is fun to be amazed, isn't it? One of the reasons, many of us enjoy sports, is for this very reason. You don't even have to be a big baseball fan, but if it is the bottom of the ninth, bases loaded, two outs, and a count of 3 balls and 2 strikes, you become a fan, for at least those few moments. We want to see what will happen, and if a great play or hit takes place, our "awe chip" is energized. How many of us have been blown away by the amazing catch of a wide receiver in football, or the hat trick of a forward in hockey...etc? Now, maybe you don't like sports, but you love to be awed by something; the powerful voice of a tenor, the amazing balance and talent of a gymnast/olympian, the convincing acting skills of a famous actor/actress, the superb agility of a stunt man. Or perhaps, you love to be awed by nature. You love to revel in beautiful scenery; waterfalls, canyons, geysers, mountains, oceans...etc. Young people, how many of you, drop your jaws over the great graphics of a fun video game? Why do graphics even matter? Why can't we just remain content with PacMan dots and Pong balls? We all love to be awed!

Have you ever wondered why that is? Why does "being amazed," bring so much joy to us? Why do we spend all kinds of money for purposes of entertainment, such that entertainers often make millions of dollars; much more than even doctors and surgeons...etc? You see, brethren, like everything else that we enjoy in this world (taste, touch, smell, hear...etc), this desire that we have, to be awed, is built into us! Notice, animals don't share this desire, do they? When is the last time, you went to a ball game, and sat next to a monkey, eating popcorn in Row F? When is the last time, you saw goats and buffalo and deer and ducks, lining up to watch the

"Blue Angels," doing all of their fantastic sky maneuvers? You don't see that, do you...because they were designed differently than us. Being "awed" and "amazed," is something specifically that reasonable creatures, created in the image and likeness of God, enjoy! And where does this come from then, brethren? I want to suggest to you, that it comes from the fact that God has designed us, with the natural capacity and desire to worship God, intelligently! We were created to worship! And that is why we love to worship! That is why we love to be awed, and to be amazed, and to revel in great realities! We love to behold; to ascribe worth...to worship!

Now, sadly, because of the fall, our focus of worship has turned away from God, and toward everything else in creation. Now, that is not to say that we ought not to be awed over everything else in creation, but rather, that awe, ought to be primarily directed toward the Creator, who has fashioned and distributed every aspect of giftedness in the creation; who has painted every scene of nature, with His own omnipotent hand; who has designed all things for His glory! In other words, in a perfect world, everything that awes an individual, should bring their attention back to God. But, because of the sin nature, we have removed God out of the equation, and have come to worship the created things instead. We have become idolators (the Apostle Paul gets into this, in Romans, chapter 1, doesn't he?). And so, although we have naturally turned away from Him, who ought to be the object and focus of our worship, the "worship chip," within each and every one of us, is still very active, isn't it? It was not completely broken by the fall, but rather, it was corrupted; being turned away from its rightful source and focus, and in the direction of everything else. We were made to worship, and so, we worship! Well brethren, a large part of our redemption, involves the proper restoring of this "worship chip," such that, it is redirected toward the Creator, who designed it, for His glory. It is being restored to its proper and rightful function, because brethren, the only One, worthy of praise, for anything and all things, is the great architect and Creator of all things! Every awe inspiring reality, beheld in this world, stems from the glory and design of the Creator! No one, can ever take an ounce of credit for anything, ever, because every ounce of credit and glory, belongs to God, and to God alone!

Well, needless to say then, as is right and proper; as we ought to expect with great anticipation, Heaven is also a place of worship, where God will be worshiped by every living

thing there, forever, to His glory, *and their enjoyment!* If we love to be awed, brethren, and so many things in this finite world, give us the joy and satisfaction of being amazed, what will it be like, to behold the all-glorious, infinite, incomprehensible, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal Creator forever and ever!? Let us state it this way: There will never, ever, not even for a moment, be a lapse of joy, in the hearts of those, who dwell in the presence of God, in glory! There will never be a dull moment, ever! It will be a never ending, "awe fest," full of praise and worship, directed toward God!

### **I. Heaven: A Place of Worship!**

In our text, the Apostle John, who is living in exile, on the island of Patmos, is carried away into a vision. And, in that vision, he is taken into the throne room of heaven. Now, while we will not be delving into the primary meaning of these passages (if you like, you can listen to the sermons that I have preached on these texts in the past---[sermonaudio.com](http://sermonaudio.com), which gets into what I believe to be the primary meaning of the texts) , I want you simply to observe, something telling, and very relevant to our main topic for this evening.

For, here, we get at least an illustrative glimpse, of the primary motivation for the ongoing worship, which will take place in heaven. After addressing the seven churches of Asia Minor, which are representative of all churches, of all ages; before getting into the rich imagery of the Revelation, which concerns the unfolding of God's will to the end of time, John is carried into heaven, and the first thing that he sees, is a throne! And this throne is at the center of every thing that exists in heaven and on earth; everything that exists, period! And the very clear declaration that is proclaimed by this imagery, is that, the One, who sits upon this throne, is wholly and completely sovereign over all things! The One, whom it bears, rules over everything, thereby ensuring, that all that He declares, must and will come to pass, without the smallest of exceptions.

And then, John beholds the One, who sits upon the throne, and of course, it is the One True and Living God, YHWH! And the imagery, which John presents us with; that which John beholds and describes, is the aura and glory, surrounding this infinite, divine Being! And the description includes various bright rays of light, a rainbow radiance, and precious stones. And

within this majestic description, we are to grasp a visual sense of the holiness, glory and grace of our eternal God. And then, moving outward, in concentric circles, there are various glorious beings, crowned elders, and angels, moving all the way back to every living creature on earth.

And throughout the course of this passage; as you follow the flow of it, you find the various creatures, which surround the throne of God, from each successive concentric circle, offering loud and jubilant worship to God, in various forms of harmony, and it is a most beautiful picture to behold, with the imagination! And when you survey the songs and the harmonious chants directed toward God (and Christ, the Lamb), in these two chapters, you are able to catch a glimpse of the three major themes of worship, which surround God's throne in heaven, and which will be the primary subject matter of our heavenly worship, when we join the saints there.

1) We will worship God for *Who He is*: [verse 8]

Here, we are told that the "four living creatures," the "cherubim," which stand closest to God's throne, repeatedly praise the holiness of God, day and night, without resting. And brethren, lest we might somehow presume their labor to be daunting, rote, or dull in any sense of the word, let me assure you, that there are no happier creatures, in all of heaven, than the cherubim, who are given the glorious privilege of basking in the glory of God, day and night, forever and ever. They never grow tired of their primary task of declaring and guarding the holiness of God, as it were! They are eternally full, always at the brim of fulfillment, without a single covetous desire, to be anywhere else among God's creatures. And they set the tone for the rest of us, as we are led to worship God, for *Who He is*, in the beauty of His holiness, and every divine attribute, which proceeds out of His glorious being (and essence), inextricably woven to His holiness, which lines and connects all of His attributes!

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"

Indeed, we will praise and worship God for the purity and righteous perfection of His Being! We will be mesmerized by the majestic purity of His holiness, of which we hardly scratch the surface, in this world. And our lips will shout aloud; not in some chaotic, disconnected, stumbling fashion, but in perfect unison and sweet harmony...we will shout aloud, with great vigor and with the utmost power of a confession, that He is "The Lord God Almighty!" That is to say, that every finite notion, in this life, which has sought to contradict this

reality; every vain, profane, challenge, on the part of fallen creatures, carrying the notion that we are independent, and God, if there be a God, is below men, and certainly not in control of the affairs of this world, will be utterly drowned out, by the chorus of heaven, where we will understand, with the utmost certainty, that God has moved and ordained and ordered, every single iota of history, every fragment of the movements of men, unto the service of His glorious, predetermined plan! He is "The Lord God *ALL-MIGHTY!*" His might and power and omnipotence are unchallengeable from every and any front! We will praise Him for this, forever, with the utmost sincerity of heart, having come into the full realization of the reality itself, with no flesh or whispering devil or contrary world, to block our view there!

And we will worship Him, "Who was and is and is to come!" The ever-existing, self-existing, reality of God's Being, will tune our lips toward His eternal praise! He has no beginning; He has always existed; He is presently existing and ruling, to the same degree as He always has, and He ever will exist, forever and ever and ever! He is eternity! He precedes and rules over, time and space and matter, those three critical elements, which help bind us to the realm of the finite!

2) We will worship God, as the Creator of *all* things: [verses 9-11]

A truly sad testimony to the great depravity of mankind, is the fact that we could ever treat our very existence, as some light or insignificant thing. We are living beings, with bodies and souls; with the natural desire to live, and to want to experience the life, that we have been so freely and graciously given! And one of the glorious blessings of the new birth, is that we come to appreciate that simple and incomprehensible reality itself; we live, we have being!

We taste all kinds of tastes, smell all kinds of smells, behold all kinds of amazing and profoundly beautiful and complex things, both living and non-living! We enjoy, we feel, we experience, we touch and feel, we hear all kinds of sounds, including the delightful tunes and notes of songs and instruments playing, and birds singing and etc! We live in a wonderfully, majestic world, with proud mountains, innumerable plants and flowers, bodies of water, billows of clouds and smoke, the wonders of fire and snow and ice, creatures of the sky, the land and the sea, microscopic worlds of creatures, unseen to the naked eye, and awesome bodies with visible and invisible parts! We study, we learn, we behold, we process, we reason, we walk and jump

and skip, we laugh, we cry, we develop and design, we exercise wisdom, we perceive...and on and on and on...we exist!

And at the very heart of all of this, stands One, all sovereign, all powerful, everywhere present, all knowing, infinite and eternal Being, who birthed everything that exists today! All of these things, brethren; indeed, everything that "is," shouts aloud, concerning the unfathomable wisdom of our God and Creator! Every single different thing; every iota of an existent fragment; all individually and combined, are lit up, sign-posts, that declare something far greater, something infinitely more glorious and majestic, namely, the very Designer behind it all! For, the lesser assumes the greater! The spectacular, finite design, speaks to the infinitely, eternally spectacular Designer!

And so, we dip into heaven's throne room, and we must; we absolutely must, hear the voices of created beings, singing aloud to the One who lives forever and ever; casting their crowns before the throne, "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; [Why???] *For* You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created!" (vs. 11).

Thanksgivings and praise and worship are aggressively and harmoniously and zealously and beautifully cast before the throne, even in the form of crowns; crowns given to redeemed men, but wholly recognized as belonging to the God, who has created, sustained and continues to uphold all things! The concentric circles of worship are blaring forth in a glorious, harmonious manner! One circle; the four living creatures, never stop praising God for His holiness, and for who He is! And the next circle; the twenty four elders, chime in with a response of praising and exalting God, for creating all things!

### 3) We will worship God and the Lamb for our glorious, and undeserved redemption:

In chapter 5, the concentric circles bellow out, unto a new song; a song of redemption, ordained by God and secured by the shed blood of the Lamb! For, the only One worthy to open up the scroll; the only One worthy of securing the unfolding of God's redemptive will, on behalf of His church, described in the entire Revelation, which follows, is the Lamb that was slain; the Son of God, even The Lord Jesus Christ!

And so, He makes His way up to the throne, and He receives the scroll, out of the right hand of God, and an eruption of praise; the eruption of a new song, which will be sung forever

and ever, in the worship of our God, thunders forth! All of the concentric circles of beings, blare forth in their proper order, taking part in this universal praise, unto God and the Lamb that was slain! [Read verses 8-14]

Again, what is the driving motivation for the coordinated and unified praise, which takes place, in this portion of the throne room scene? What is the great focal point of the "new song," being sung here? The holiness of God and the creative work of God, are the subjects of old songs, that continue on for eternity. But this song, involves something that has recently taken place; it is a new song, which has, as its main object of praise, a Lamb that was slain! And of course then, we find the motivation for this praise, given in verse 9, "For you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation..." The redemptive plan of God, up to its completion, bound up in the scroll, can now be loosed and enacted, because of all that the Lamb has accomplished by His death!

And so, one of the main thrusts of our ongoing worship of God, in heaven, will be redemption! Indeed, although our God has given all of us, the glorious privilege of existence, and that existence, consisting of bearing His own image, we have alienated ourselves from God, in the sin of our first parents. We have incurred His judgment and wrath; leading to eternal death, and condemnation; to total ruin in hell fire, forever! To be created by God, and then to be cast out of the presence of God, only to become the proper object of His wrath and judgment, is beyond terrifying, utterly deplorable, and hopelessly despairing!

But God has done the unthinkable! He has ordained and fulfilled a way, of reconciling us to Himself! He has sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, to take on our flesh, and to bear the wrath that we deserve, in His own body! Our blessed Messiah, has become our precious sacrificial Lamb, purchasing, with His own blood, a people from every tribe and tongue and nation! He has redeemed us, from out of the pit of utter misery and despair, only to elevate us to the position of sons and daughters of the living God! And He did all of this, no thanks to any desire or positive inclination of our own! He loved us, even while we were yet sinners! He predestined to sanctify us, and to conform us into the very image of His Son! He secured that salvation, in time and space, by the shed blood of His Blessed Son! He effectually called us, by the irresistible grace and regenerative power of the Holy Spirit! And now, we cry out "Abba,

Father!, in Christ! Indeed, He has made us kings and priests to our God, and we do and will reign with Him! And we are destined to dwell in His glorious presence, forever and ever and ever, with an innumerable host of saints and heavenly beings!

Indeed brethren, heaven is a place of worship! And the worship is neither dreadful nor boring nor forced! It is desirable; most desirable! When once we shed this flesh, and every hindrance of our old man, is wholly done away with; when that which we see in part now, is utterly clear, we will wholly delight in reveling in the glory of our awesome God, forever! We will worship Him for who He is, for all that He has done in creation, and for the redemption that He has freely given us in Christ!

"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!'" (vs. 13)

AMEN!!!