

Heaven: The Throne Room of the Universe

The Theme of True Biblical Worship is Redemption

Revelation 5:1-8

There is a Redeemer and with Him I stand in glory

As we open to Revelation 5, each of us who are born-again believers: are seeing ourselves in the future; and what is it we are doing when God lets us see ourselves? Singing praises to **our Redeemer!**

Proper Worship always focuses upon the Redeemer, always praises His redemption, and always comes from the Redeemed.

There are few times that God's Word allows us to actually see what we will be doing in Heaven and they always involves us seeing ourselves worshiping the True and Living God and His Son **our Redeemer.**

Notice what we are focused upon in Heaven—a Redeemer who died in our place!

As we begin chapter 5, we are coming to the fourth element of worship we see in these two chapters. Do you remember the other three. Let me just sketch again, the first three, to reinforce our memories.

First we have already seen that: **God introduces us that Holiness as the Setting for Worshipping Him, before we hear the words or see the actions of the worshipping saints** (Rev. 4:1-7).

That teaches us that the setting for worship is important, and that God wants our worship to start by a reverent focusing upon Him as the Awesome and Almighty One upon the Throne.

Secondly, **God presents to us that our Reflective worship of Him as His saints around His Throne is offered in a responsive manner** (Rev. 4:8-10).

Our worship around His Throne in Heaven is not individually prompted, but it is Divinely prompted.

Notice that the first glimpse of our worship takes place after, and at the

prompting of, those burning/living creatures. It is the seraphim and cherubim that first take the stage to lead our worship.

Above all the other sights of color and sparkling crystal: they loudly declare God's Holiness.

Over all the other sounds of rumbling, voices, and thundering: is their cry that pierces through Heaven that God Almighty is Holy, Holy, Holy.

It is at that instant that everyone and everything responds in worship.

At that moment nothing else matters, nothing else takes place: all of Heaven stops to bow, every conversation ceases, every activity halts, every thought focuses upon the One who sits upon the Throne.

Thirdly, **God reveals to us that the Content of our worship is completely focused upon Him as the Glorious, Honored, and Powerful Lord** (Rev. 4:11).

Every word we will say is so carefully chosen to lift His Name high, to make His work the focus, to reflect our gratitude for His wondrous salvation.

Note God's worthiness alone to get the glory, not ours. God is to be honored. We do not want to be taking any of His honor or glory for ourselves.

It is amazing that the front row of the worshippers (the 24 elders) fall down so their faces are not seen, but He is seen. They cast off their crowns at His feet to declare that those crowns came from Him, belong to Him, and are only a reflection of Him.

When we get to Heaven we have a strong aversion to the spotlight. We don't take any of the credit, all the glory, honor and power goes to the Lord.

Fourthly, **God emphasizes the Redemptive nature of much of the worship in Heaven during the Tribulation reflects the conquest of the rebellion against their Creator and King** (Rev. 5:1-8).

Redeem, Redeemer, and redemption are words that show up 169 times in the NKJV of the Bible. These are the last two times the word redeem is used in the Bible.

Redemption is one of the great unifying themes of all the Scriptures. In fact one man entitled a book he wrote as an overview of the entire Bible: ***The Unfolding Drama of Redemption***; and another Bible teacher wrote these words in his introduction to his commentary on every part of God's Word:

"The Bible reveals God's plan for this redemption from its inception in eternity past to its completion in eternity future. Covenants, promises, and epochs are all secondary to the one continuous plan of redemption.

There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Only 4 of them don't involve a fallen world: the first 2 and the last 2—before the Fall and after the creation of the new heaven and new earth. The rest is the chronicle of the tragedy of sin".¹

Our Worship in Heaven is Built Upon Reflections of our Redemption

Redemption is central to everything God is doing, so to get ready for our part up there, with Bibles open and following along, please stand again, listen and feel the: **Content of our human worship is completely focused upon Him as the Glorious, Honored, and Powerful Lord** as we read Revelation 5:1-8 (NKJV):

And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

⁸ 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.

The content of True Biblical Worship is focused upon redemption in Heaven. In the Old Testament God is the merciful, gracious, and longsuffering One. In the New Testament we see that is because of Christ's sacrifice that He allows us into His presence.

True Biblical Worship: Centers Upon the Cross of Christ's Redeeming Sacrifice (Revelation 5:1-8)

Jesus Christ as God's Lamb was our substitute that was sacrificed to take the penalty of our sin. Rev. 5:6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

Part-4: REDEMPTION Revelation 5:9-12

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Redeem, Redeemer, and redemption are words that show up 169 times in the NKJV of the Bible. These are the last two times the word redeem is used in the Bible.

Redemption is viewed by many Bible teachers to be the unifying theme of all the Scriptures. In fact one man entitled his commentary on the Bible *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*; and another man wrote this in his introduction to his commentary on every part of God's Word:

“The Bible reveals God’s plan for this redemption from its inception in eternity past to its completion in eternity future. Covenants, promises, and epochs are all secondary to the one continuous plan of redemption.

There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Only 4 of them don’t involve a fallen world: the first 2 and the last 2—before the Fall and after the creation of the new heaven and new earth. The rest is the chronicle of the tragedy of sin”.²

Redemption is a word that speaks of debts being paid, freedom being purchased and a life going in a completely new direction from the point of redemption onward.

So this morning join me for the greatest theme in all the Bible—the redemption of lost sinners by the God who so loved the world that he gave His Son to die on a cross and shed His blood to pay the price of sin! And where better to see that theme than the way we will be—singing the new song of our worthy redeemer.

Please stand and follow along as we read these words:

² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

*Revelation 5:9-12 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, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." 11 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,12 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 14:2-4 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.3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand **who were redeemed from the earth**. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. **These were redeemed from among men**, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.*

Pray.

You and I are really in debt this morning.

I'm not talking about the trillions of dollars of our national debt; nor the trillions more dollars of credit card, auto loans, and mortgage debt. I am referring to the debt we owe to God for our sins.

In a real sense every time we sin it is an offense to God; we are obligated as His creations to obey Him—and we don't. So we go through life racking up an ever larger, un-payable debt of sin (Gal. 3:10; James 2:10; cf. Matt. 18:23–27).

The legal obligations of debt, was an illustration Paul liked to use. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, he was writing to a church he had never visited. When he explained to them salvation he used a picture they would instantly recognize and never forget.

Open with me to Colossians 2:13-14 and watch Paul masterfully take those saints from Colosse and the world they lived in each day and transport them before the Holy God of Heaven and then back with a clear understanding of Christ's work on their behalf.

In the Roman Empire that surrounds the New Testament, when ever a person was convicted of a crime the law courts that convicted them, also produced a "certificate of debt" that listed the exact crime and the punishment that had to be paid before the criminal would be freed.

The convicted criminal or debtor would have to sign the certificate and acknowledge the

debt or punishment for the crime was rightfully his. This certificate of debt was then nailed to the door of the cell where they were imprisoned until their sentence was completed and the crimes were "paid" for.

Colossians 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

This is precisely the legal imagery that Paul draws upon in Colossians 2:13-14. The word 'handwriting' in v. 13 is the exact word for the list of crimes and/or debts the person was responsible for. Jesus took each of those "Certificates of Debt" upon Himself as He hung upon that cross. "Believers' sins were all put to Christ's account, nailed to His cross as He paid the penalty in their place for them all, thus satisfying the just wrath of God against crimes requiring punishment in full".³

So as God the Father looked down at Christ He saw your sins and mine. John calls it "the sin of the world"; and it was the totality of the sin of all humans that was nailed on Christ's Cross. The Cross was Jesus declaring that He was guilty of every sin listed off for everyone of us and all who would ever live.

Now turn to the record of Christ's death upon the cross. The climactic end of Christ's redemption as the Lamb of God was captured by John as he stood at the foot of the Cross. Looking up through the darkness he heard and recorded Christ's one word.

*John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

In English we say "it is finished"; but in Greek those words are summed up in the single word that John heard Christ gasp on the cross—**tetelestai**.

Tetelestai was Jesus declaring to God His Father that the price of salvation was paid; and the debt of the sin of the world was paid; and the work of redemption was complete.

This word was a word that was very familiar to those of the New Testament times. This word tetelestai should burn into our hearts and minds because it was exactly the same word that a Roman judge would write on a criminals certificate of debt when he was released from prison—tetelestai, your debt to the Roman law is paid in full.

It is the same word that would be written on the certificate of a slave who had been enslaved to pay off a debt—tetelestai, your debt is paid in full, you may now go forth as a free man!

³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

Paid in full is what Jesus cried from the cross of His redemption as the work of salvation was once and for all time completed; and paid in full is what He declares each time we come to Him confessing our sins.

Paid in full is what Jesus our advocate says while standing before God the Father as Satan the Accuser points out yet another time we have sinned.

Paid in full, redeemed, bought by the blood of the Lamb, and redeemed—that is what we shall forever sing in Heaven around His Throne.

The wonder of Christ's redemption is always before us. When Charles Wesley wrote down his meditation on redemption in 1738, it took the form of a hymn called "And Can It Be".

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain—
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

He left His Father's throne above
So free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O my God, it found out me!
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,

And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

There is one great word that captures the essence of our salvation this morning, and that word is redemption.

Redemption involves the blood of Jesus shed as He died on the Cross to pay the purchase price of our salvation. So redemption sums up Christ's death, His blood shed, His life given as a substitutionary sacrifice. So if any portion of salvation can be ranked as any more vital than any other—redemption would be at the top of the list.

The Connection Between: Redemption, Justification & Sanctification

Remember the illustration of the “Big Three Doctrines” from youth ministry many years ago? The big three we need to always understand are: redemption, justification, and sanctification.

We started life on earth as dead in our trespasses and sin (pictured by my pen laying on the palm of my hand); **redemption** is when Jesus reached down and bought us out of the slave market of sin (that is my hand grasping the pen); **justification** is Jesus lifting me to be seated with Him already in Heaven, we are completely freed from the penalty and record of our sin; **sanctification** is God forever binding our souls into His grasp and pulling us closer and closer to Him until at the end of our earthly life, He safely lands us into His Presence for ever.

So we may say that salvation starts with Christ's work on the cross and Christ's work on the cross as He shed His blood in death for our sins is redemption.

Peter at the end of his life summed up our redemption with these precious words in I Peter 1:18-19:

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

So Christ's sacrifice as a lamb is the picture of redemption. Immediately that should remind us of many verses that are vital and central to salvation.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

Because of our sin—we are all slaves in bondage to sin and death; so we need Christ's payment of His death to buy us and take us out of the slave market of sin.

The gift of salvation is about Jesus who died to take slaves and make them freed forever—**that's redemption!** A Sinner stands before God as a slave and is granted freedom by Christ's payment.

In Redemption we go from being a slave chained to our sins to complete freedom by God and a new focus.

Christ's death to pay the price of our sin is so wonderful that we, the redeemed of all the ages will be joined by the angels so that together we may sing a new song, as Revelation records:

And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:9–12)

Unleashing the Truth of Redemption

We need to experience what the Scriptures often declare—God has liberated us from our slavery to sin, broken sins chains that long had enslaved us and freed us to focus our lives on what really matters to Him.

*Romans 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus". **Because I'm redeemed—Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment.** Say that aloud with me*

*Romans 8:23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. **Because I'm redeemed—I have a new body coming!** Say that aloud with me*

*1 Corinthians 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. This verse summarizes the three tenses of our salvation. In the past we *have been saved* from the penalty of sin (righteousness); and in the present we *are being saved* from the power of sin (sanctification); and in the future we *shall be saved* from the presence of sin (redemption). **Because I'm redeemed—Jesus is all I need!** Say that aloud with me*

1 Corinthians 6:20 "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body

and in your spirit, which are God's". **Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price—I belong to God.** Say that aloud with me

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. **Because I'm redeemed—I will live for my Redeemer.** Say that aloud with me

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **Because I'm redeemed—I no longer live for myself!** Say that aloud with me

Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. Since we have not been saved by our good works, we cannot be lost by our bad works. **Because I'm redeemed—my sins are forgiven forever.** Say that aloud with me

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them". **Because Christ bought me in redemption—I am God's workmanship.** Say that aloud with me

Philippians 1:6 "...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ". **Because I'm redeemed—God will finish what He started in me.** Say that aloud with me

Colossians 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. **Because I'm redeemed—my sin debt is forever paid in full.** Say that aloud with me

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. **Because I'm redeemed—I am set free from every bondage to be zealous for God!** Say that aloud with me

Revelation 5:9-12 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, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." 11 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,12 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!" **Because I'm redeemed—I will worship the Lord forever!** Say that aloud with me

Communion is celebrating our Redeemer, thanking Him for our redemption, and declaring the truths of our redeemed lives.

Be sure you have opened the gift of salvation, given by Jesus.

- Because I'm redeemed—Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment.
- Because I'm redeemed—I have a new body coming.
- Because I'm redeemed—Jesus is all I need!
- Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price—I belong to God.
- Because I'm redeemed—I will live for my Redeemer.
- Because I'm redeemed—I no longer live for myself!
- Because I'm redeemed—my sins are forgiven forever.
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- Because I'm redeemed—God will finish what He started in me.
- Because I'm redeemed—my sin debt is forever paid in full.
- Because I'm redeemed—I am set free from every bondage to be zealous for God!
- Because I'm redeemed—I will worship the Lord forever

Seeing Ourselves In the Future

Finally, **God actually records for us our words and our actions as we stand around the Throne during the Tribulation** (Rev. 5:9-14).

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So this morning join me for the greatest theme in all the Bible—the redemption of lost sinners by the God who so loved the world that he gave His Son to die on a cross and shed His blood to pay the price of sin! And where better to see that theme than the way we will be—singing the new song of our worthy redeemer.

10. True Biblical Worship: Understands God's Wrath is Against Un-Confessed, Un-Forsaken, and Un-Forgiven Sins (Revelation 5:9-14)

- The worship of the King flows out and explains His wrath against sin. Paul explains the wrath of God in Romans 1:18: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness."
- Jesus returns in the blazing fire of wrath against sin in II Thessalonians 1:7b-8 when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Revelation 6-20 completely fits as a result of the finished work of Christ upon the Cross. He stands with His arms open to the world and pours out His righteous and holy wrath against sinners who will not turn to Him away from their sins.
- 10. True Biblical Worship: Understands God's Wrath is Against Un-Confessed, Un-Forsaken, and Un-Forgiven Sins (Revelation 5:9-14)

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thousand, and thousands of thousands,12 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!"

¹³ 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!"

¹⁴ Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Today, in Revelation 4-5, we see ourselves in the future, with all of the true believers of all times, gathered in Heaven as the true worshippers of God, worshipping at the highest level in: unhindered, focused, and glorified worship.

Hallelujah, what a blessing!

- ***Worship rises before our God in Revelation 5, where Christ's work on the Cross is central.***

*Rev. 5:6 And I looked, and behold, **in the midst of the throne** and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, **stood a Lamb as though it had been slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.*

- I. WORTHY OF WORSHIP IS JESUS THE ETERNAL CREATOR (Chapter 4) 2
Corinthians 4:6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
 - A. all The angelic hosts worship him (V.8) – "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO IS WHO WAS AND WHO IS TO COME" = ETERNITY.
 - B. THE 24 ELDERS WORSHIP HIM (v.11) – "Worthy art thou our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they existed and were created." = Creator see Ezk 36:26 and II Cor 4.6.

- II. WORTHY OF WORSHIP IS JESUS THE REDEEMING SAVIOR (Chapter 5) Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.
 - A. The 24 elders worship him. V. 9-10 – "WORTHY ART THOU TO TAKE THE BOOK, FOR THOU WAS SLAIN AND DOST PURCHASE FOR GOD, WITH THY BLOOD,

MEN FROM EVERY TRIBE AND TONGUE AND PEOPLE AND NATION. AND THOU HAST MADE THEM TO BE A KINGDOM AND PRIESTS TO OUR GOD..." = REDEEMER FROM THE SLAVE MARKET OF SIN.

- B. THE INNUMERABLE ANGELIC HOSTS AND ALL CREATION WORSHIP HIM (vv. 12-14) – "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing...forever and ever." = Savior

III. WORTHY OF WORSHIP IS JESUS GIVING LIFE (Chapter 7) (John 14:6 and Acts 5:20)

- A. The innumerable multitude cries out in worship. "SALVATION TO OUR GOD WHO SITS ON THE THRONE"
✓ THIS IS SALVATION FROM DEATH'S POWER.
✓ ETERNAL LIFE LIBERATES US TO SEE WE ARE ONLY TEMPORARILY IN THIS BODY!
- B. All the angels and creatures fall and say (v.12), "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever."
✓ He is worthy of all praise. Everyone has a god and they look more like who or whatever it is every day.

IV. WORTHY OF WORSHIP IS JESUS THE CONQUERING WARRIOR (Chapter 11) 2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

- A. A VOICE FROM HEAVEN (v.15) – "THE KINGDOM OF THE WORLD HAS BECOME THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST, AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER" –
✓ JESUS IS CONQUEROR OF ALL KINGDOMS.
- B. The 24 elders (vv. 16-17) – "We give thanks, O Lord God, the almighty, who art and who wast, because thou hast taken thy great power and hast begun to reign"
✓ Jesus is reigning over all.

V. WORTHY OF WORSHIP IS JESUS CRUSHING SATAN (Chapters 12-19). 1 John 3:8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil..

1. The voice from Heaven (12:10-12) – "Now the salvation and power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down...and they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb"
✓ Satan is defeated.
2. The victorious tribulation warriors (15:3-4) – "Great and marvelous are thy works O lord God, the almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou king of the nations"
✓ His saints sing songs of victory.

The angels of the altar, waters, and the earth all say (16:5-7; 17:14), "Righteous art thou who art and wast, O holy one, because thou didst judge these things...they deserve it...and the Lamb will overcome him because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with him are called and chosen and faithful"

Creation echoes the majesty of His worthy judgment and sacrifice.

3. The multitude of the redeemed and the 24 elders (19:1-5) – "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, because his judgments are true and righteous. And they fell down and worshipped."
 - ✓ They fall before their just Judge, to Whom they submit.
4. THE MULTITUDE IN UNISON CRY OUT TO THE LORD IN EXULTATION (19:6-7) - "HALLELUJAH, FOR THE LORD OUR GOD, THE ALMIGHTY REIGNS; FOR THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB HAS COME"
 - ✓ THIS IS THE SHOUT OF ANTICIPATION FOR UNBROKEN UNION WITH THE KING OF THE UNIVERSE.

VI. WORTHY OF WORSHIP IS JESUS COMING AS THE BRIDEGROOM, OUR EMMANUEL(Chapters 21-22).

- A. The voice from the throne (21:3-4) – "Behold the tabernacle of God is among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be among them."
 - ✓ All praise for Emmanuel
 - ✓ God is now with us as He promised (Matthew 1:22).
- B. The Voice of Jesus calling all who are thirsty to come to Him. (22:16-17) "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

So we see Him as a multi-faceted diamond in eternal cascading glory as each one of these divine descriptions echoes through the celestial realm.

- ✓ Our Eternal Creator,
- ✓ Our Redeeming Savior,
- ✓ Our Giver of life,
- ✓ Our conquering Warrior,
- ✓ Our Crusher of Satan,
- ✓ Our just Judge and
- ✓ Our Bridegroom Emmanuel.

We lift to thee our praise and honor, glory and worship, that thou mightest count us by the blood of thy Son to walk worthy of an invitation to worship thee soon with that multitude --for truly, thou art worthy,
O Lamb of God

At this point in God's plan for the ages, we will have already arrived in heaven by way of "the snatching away," the Rapture. Thus, we will be part of the redeemed of all the ages who will worship in this celestial atmosphere around the throne.

Worship—to glorify God and enjoy Him forever—is our main purpose for existence. And true worship will always center totally on God, as is seen in the fourth stanza of this glorifying old hymn: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth, and sky, and sea; Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty! God in Three persons, blessed Trinity!*²

Let us now look in chronological order at chapters 4–22 and see Christ, the Lamb, being exalted by the faithful angelic hosts and the redeemed saints. You see, worship is the background music of God's kingdom. Songs of worship and triumph, which occur in eleven chapters of Revelation (4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, and 22), make up the background music to the story.

Chapter 4—Jesus is worthy of worship as the Creator. God, as Creator, is on the throne. Salvation starts with the acknowledgment of Jesus as Creator: *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* (Colossians 1:16; see also Acts 14:15; 17:24).

Jesus is worthy of worship because He ... *is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* (2 Corinthians 4:6).

All the angelic hosts worship Him: *"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"* (Revelation 4:8). By this point we will get to join in the worship of heaven! At last, we will blend our voices with all of the angels and all of Creation and start our eternal, sacrificial service to our King.

The twenty-four elders worship Him: *"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"* (Revelation 4:11; see also Ezekiel 36:26; 2 Corinthians 4:6).

Chapter 5—Jesus is worthy of worship as the Redeeming Savior. In this chapter, the focus turns to Jesus the Redeemer, God's Son, who is before the throne. And the twenty-four elders worship Him: *"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, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth"* (Revelation 5:9–10; see also Titus 2:14).

In Revelation 5:13 the worship goes to Father and Son, which affirms Christ's deity: *"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing! ... Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"* (5:12, 14). The innumerable angelic hosts and all Creation worship Him, for He is our blessed Savior for all eternity!

Temple: Rev. 7.15; 11.19; 14.15,17; 15.5,6,8; 16.1, 17; 21.22

Ark: 11.19

Censer: 8.3,5

Golden Incense Altar: 8.3; 8.5; 9.13

Only two chapters in the Bible are devoted to the creation story, whereas some fifty chapters focus on the Tabernacle (see especially Ex. 25-40). The Tabernacle is important and demands attention in our study, because it is a giant portrait of Jesus Christ. Everywhere you look in the Tabernacle you can see Him.

1. **THE COURTYARD OF THE TABERNACLE** was one hundred fifty feet long and seventy-five feet wide. Its single gate, on the east side, was thirty feet wide and seven and a half feet high, allowing a large number of people to enter at the same time. It is a graphic picture of Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the way" and "I am the door." Just as there was only one entrance to the Tabernacle, there is only one way to God-the only Way and the only Door, Jesus Christ. Christianity is exclusive, not because Christians make it so but because God has made it so. Throughout the centuries, of course, Christians have made the earthly church exclusive in many wrong ways. But God has intentionally made His spiritual, eternal church exclusive. It can be entered only through Jesus Christ.
2. The first article of furniture in the outer court was **THE BRONZE ALTAR**. It was made of acacia wood sheathed with bronze. It was seven and a half feet square, stood four and a half feet off the ground, and was topped with a bronze grate. The coals were placed underneath the grate and the sacrifice was placed on top. On the four corners of the altar were horns, to which the animal was bound when it was being sacrificed. The bronze altar is again a perfect picture of Jesus Christ, who Himself was a sacrifice for sin.
3. The next piece of furniture in the court was **THE LAVET** or basin, also made of bronze. In it the priests would wash their hands, and even sometimes their feet, as they went about the bloody services of sacrifice. Here is a picture of Jesus Christ as the cleanser of His people. Once we have received forgiveness for our sins through Christ's sacrifice of Himself, we still need His daily cleansing that restores fellowship and joy.
4. Still moving west across the courtyard, we come to **THE TABERNACLE** proper-forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high. The holy place took up two-thirds of this area, which means that the holy of holies was a perfect fifteen-foot cube. Only priests could go into the Holy Place, in which were three pieces of furniture. The writer of Hebrews mentions only two, because, as he says, he cannot speak in detail (9:5).
5. *The Holy Place*. On the left, as the priest entered, was a solid **GOLD LAMPSTAND** having seven branches, each filled with the purest olive oil. "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world," Jesus said (John 9:5). When He left the world, the world was left in darkness, and only for believers is He the light of life. He is the light that directs our paths, the One who, through the Spirit, illumines our minds to understand spiritual truth. He is the One who, by the indwelling Spirit, guides us through the world of darkness. He is our light.
6. On the right was **THE TABLE** on which was **THE SACRED BREAD**, or show-bread. This table, like the base of the altar, was of acacia wood overlaid with gold. It was three feet long, one and a half feet wide, and two and a quarter feet high. Every Sabbath twelve loaves of fresh bread were set on

it, one for each of the twelve tribes. At the end of the week, the priests, and only the priests, were allowed to eat the loaves. Jesus is our sustenance. He is our table of sacred bread. He is the One who feeds us every day, who sustains us with the Word. The Word is not only our food but our light. And the oil is the Spirit of God, who lights the Word for us. The altar of incense pictures Jesus interceding for us, the perfect Sacrifice becoming the perfect Intercessor.

7. Farther in and to the center of the Holy Place was **THE ALTAR OF INCENSE**. It, too, was of gold-overlaid acacia wood, one and one-half feet square and about three feet high. On this altar were placed the burning coals from the bronze altar in the courtyard, where sacrifice was made. These three pieces of furniture also picture Christ. Everything in the outer courtyard was connected with salvation and the cleansing of sins.
 - Jesus accomplished His sacrificial work on earth, outside God's heavenly presence.
 - The outer court was accessible to all the people, just as Christ is accessible to all who will come to Him.
 - But in His heavenly sanctuary He is shut off from the world, temporarily even from His own people.
 - From His heavenly place now, Jesus lights our path (pictured by the golden lampstand), He feeds us (pictured by the table of sacred bread), and He intercedes for us (pictured by the altar of incense).

8. *The Holy of Holies*. Behind the second veil, there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, into which only the high priest could enter, and that but once a year, on the Day of Atonement. In this holiest of earthly places was only one piece of furniture, the ark of the covenant. In it were three very precious articles: a golden jar holding manna, Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant. Made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, it was about three feet nine inches long, two feet three inches wide and two feet high. On the lid was the mercy seat, on which were the cherubim of glory, angelic figures made of solid gold. It was between the wings of those angels, on the mercy seat, that God met men. "And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel" (Ex. 25:22). If God and man were to meet it could only have been there. The central, in fact the only, thing in the Holy of Holies was **THE ARK**, which represents Jesus Christ, the true mercy seat. When we meet Jesus Christ as Savior, we are ushered into the presence of God, into the true Holy of Holies. God no longer communes with men between the wings of cherubim on a gold mercy seat. He communes with men in His Son, by whom the veil was torn in two. Jesus Christ is the mercy seat. Only on the basis of the blood of a goat would God have fellowship with Israel, and only on the basis of the blood of Christ will God have fellowship with men. John, in using the term "propitiation," in 1 John 2:2, relates Jesus to the mercy seat, since that very word **hilasterion** is used for mercy seat in the Septuagint translation of Exodus 25:174.

4MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.