"THOU ART WORTHY"

Revelation 4:1-11

4-3-2022

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 7.

***God is worthy of your praise!**

2 Reasons:

I. God is worthy of your praise because of <u>WHO HE IS</u> (v. 8)
(His Attributes)

A. Praise His <u>Purity</u>

B. Praise His <u>Power</u>

C. Praise His <u>Permanence</u>

II. God is worthy of your praise because of <u>WHAT HE HAS DONE</u> (v. 11)
(His Actions)

Essentials to True Worship:

A. A deep sense of one's own <u>unworthiness</u> (v. 10

B. A recognition that God is <u>worthy of all</u> praise (v. 11a)

C. A desire to bring to God the <u>pleasure</u> that is due Him (v. 11b)

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When you think of Heaven, what comes to mind?

Pearly gates, angels floating around with harps; puffy clouds, etc.

Rev. 4 & 5 give us a glimpse of Heaven and the majesty of God.

In heaven the focus is around the <u>throne</u> of God.

Key word in chapter 4 = "Throne" (14x)
(46 x in entire book of Revelation)

4:1

"After this" = after the events of chapters 2 and 3 (which described the 7 churches that are characteristic of "Bible-preaching churches" during the church age)

"A door was opened in heaven" = the next time the door is said to be open is in Rev. 19:11, when Christ returns with His saints at the end of the Tribulation.

"Trumpet" = the next "voice" (sound), we hear will be the trumpet of God at the Rapture (I Th. 4:16). That trumpet will say the same thing -- "Come up hither!"

"<u>Must</u> be hereafter" = "must" = necessary or binding. The events of the future not only will take place; they <u>must</u> take place to fulfill God's prophecy.

Nothing will stop His Word from being fulfilled.

Even the Devil (who knows Scripture) will play right into God's plan for the future (cp. Rev. 12-13).

"Hereafter" = after the church age, described in chapters 2 and 3.

The "hereafter" begins the third point in John's outline of Revelation (SEE Rev. 1:19).

4:2
"In the Spirit" = John entered into the spiritual (cp. Rev. 1:10).

Such a transformation is not a process, but immediate, much like the transformation of believers at the rapture and resurrection (I Cor. 15:52).

"Throne" - depicts the <u>majesty</u> of a Ruler (king) and the <u>authority</u> of a Judge.

4:3
NOTE: John sees no form of God (Ex. 24:10; Jn. 4:24), but only the brilliant flashing gems that reflect His glory.

"Jasper" = was a translucent (clear) crystal; like diamond, pointing to the glory of God (Rev. 21:11); possibly hinting at the purity and holiness of God (Mounce).

"Sardine" - sardius stone. This was a blood red stone named after Sardis near which it was found. The color "blood red" may hint at the blood that Christ shed; or the coming wrath or judgment of Christ, who wears "a garment dipped in blood" (Rev. 19:13).

This rainbow was a complete circle, not merely 180 degrees.

4:4
"24 elders" - literal 24 saved believers who were redeemed by the blood of Jesus (cp. Rev. 5:8-10), who have received a special position of reigning with Christ. NOTE: Every resurrected or raptured believer will reign with Christ in the 1,000 year kingdom (Rev. 20:4, 6).

These 24, however, seem to have a pre-eminent position in their reign (hence the title "elder").
Many commentators view these 24 "elders" as being representative of all church age saints. If this was so, why the specific number 24? Could not God have stated their number like He did the innumerable angels in Rev. 5:11?

[24 - cp. the 24 courses of the Aaronic priestly order mentioned in I Chron. 24:3-5; 18; cp. Lk. 1:5-9]

"White raiment" - symbolized imputed righteousness and purity.

"Crowns" - a "stephanos" or victor's wreath.
Such a crown would evidently indicate that they had been faithful during life on earth -- possibly martyrs (cp. the connection between crowns and martyrdom - Rev. 2:10).

"Crowns of gold" - victor's wreaths were normally made of corruptible materials (I Cor. 9:25). EX: In the Isthmian games, it was a crown of pine.

These crowns are incorruptible! Pure!

4:5
"Seven spirits of God" - the 7-fold manifestation of the Holy Spirit. These 7 spirits are called "lamps" (Lights; burning torches - Zech. 4:2), and are part of Jesus Christ (the Lamb) - called His "eyes" (Rev. 5:6; cp. Zech. 4:10).

These "7 spirits" refer to the Holy Spirit in His perfection (Zech. 4:6).

4:6
"Sea of glass like unto crystal" = Everything associated with God is pure, clean, and clear. Those saved during the tribulation are said to "stand on the sea of glass" (Rev. 15:2-4).

"Beasts" = living creatures

"Four beasts" - cherubim - angelic creatures that had the appearance of a fiery bright flame.

SEE: Ezekiel 1:4-14.

These creatures can see in all directions. Ezekiel describes them as being four-sided.

Rev. 4:8 - "six wings"; Ezek. 1:6 - "four wings"

NOTE: They had 6 wings, but 2 were linked to each other (Ezek. 1:9), forming a circle.

NOTE: Rev. 4:9 - "Round about the throne" = encircling the throne. These creatures surround the throne! They are constantly gazing into the face of God. No wonder all they can say is "holy, holy, holy"!

4:6b
EX: As the President of the U.S. is surrounded by bodyguards who protect him wherever he goes, so the angelic beings in Rev. 4 protect the holiness of God (Epp, p. 28).

The "four beasts" comprise the inner circle around the throne; the 24 elders form an outer circle (4:4), and Jesus Christ is in the center! (cp. 5:6) next to the Father (5:7).

4:7

These living creatures were created solely for the purpose of worshipping God!

Therefore they comprise the best of the animate world. They are the noblest (lion), strongest (calf - ox), wisest (man) and swiftest (eagle) (Swete, cited from Reinecker, p. 823).

***God is worthy of your praise!**

2 Reasons:

I. God is worthy of your praise because of WHO HE IS (v. 8)
(His Attributes)

"Rest not" - unceasing praise! Non-stop adoration! They do not pause in their praise.

Contrast: No rest of giving praise, with the no rest of those in torment forever (Rev. 14:9-11).

A. Praise His Purity

They praise God's:

"Holy, holy, holy" (cp. Is. 6:3).

Why is God holy three times?

--An allusion to the Trinity
--An emphasis on this attribute

God is called the "Holy One" (Hos.11:9) and the "Holy One of Israel" (Is.41:14,16,20)

Holiness is an attribute that God has to an infinite degree above and beyond anything or anyone in creation.

> "*There is none holy as the LORD"* (I Sam.2:2)
> *"Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy"* (Rev.15:4)

"Holy" = (Hebrew = qadosh; Greek = hagios) The basic idea of the word is separate-ness or apart-ness. (Example: The Bible is often called the "Holy Bible" because it is a "book" that is "set apart" from all others.

Note: The words "sanctify" and "saint" come from the same Hebrew & Greek root words and mean "set apart" or "set apart one"

God being HOLY is "set apart" from everything that is common or unclean; To profane God is to strike against His Holiness.

God's holiness is manifest in two ways:

1) Majestic Transcendence - God is set apart from all that is created (Is. 57:15)

2) Moral Purity - God is set apart from all that is unclean (Hab.1:13; I Peter 1:13-16)

"Holiness," as defined as "set apart," is noted by many theologians as the "fundamental attribute" of God (the foundational attribute of God) It is the attribute of attributes.

All of God's attributes are equal, but all are qualified (or conditioned) by His holiness.

EX: God is set apart from and above all beings in creation in His love, mercy, truth, righteousness, faithfulness, knowledge, wisdom, sovereignty, etc.

God can't be loving . . . apart from His holiness.

God's holiness qualifies every other attribute He possesses.
"His love is *holy* love...His justice is *holy* justice...His wisdom is *holy* wisdom...His arm of power is a "*holy* arm" (Ps.98:1)...His promise is a "*holy* promise" (Ps.105:42)...His name is a *holy* name (Psalm 103:1).

Everything about God is HOLY
- His Attributes
- His Name (reputation) (Ps.99:3; 111:9; Ezek.36:20-22)
- His Works (Ps.145:17)
- His Glory (Light) (Exod. 15:11; Is.6:3; I John 1:5-7)
- His Spirit (Ps.51:11; Is.63:10)

Everything belonging to God is HOLY
- His Holy Nation (Exod.19:6)
- His Holy Place (the Temple) (Ps.11:4; 65:4)
- His Holy People (Dt.7:6; 14:2)
- His Holy City (Jerusalem) (Ps.2:6; Is.52:1; 66:20)
- His Holy Camp (Dt.23:14)
- His Holy Levites (II Chron.35:3)
- His Holy Ark (II Chron.35:3)
- His Holy Days (Lev.23; Is.58:13)
- His Holy Promise (Ps.105:42; Lk.1:72)
- His Holy Scriptures (Rom.1:2)
- His Holy Prophets (Luke 1:70)

Everywhere God is HOLY
- "Holy Ground" (Ex.3:5; Josh.5:15)
- "Holy Habitation" (Deut.26:15)
- "The Throne of His Holiness" (Ps.47:8)

B. Praise His Power

"Lord God Almighty"

God's DESCRIPTION of His Power

1) God's power is exclusive (Ps. 62:11)
(It belongs to Him alone)

"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God" (Ps. 62:11).
God (in contrast to man) only needs to speak once and His wish is heard and fulfilled.

"Power belongeth unto God" - and to Him alone.
God is independently powerful.
"Not a creature in the entire universe has an atom of power save what God delegates. But God's power is not acquired" (Pink, p. 47).

2) God's power is eternal

Is. 26:4 - "Trust ye in the LORD forever; for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."

God's power never changes, never diminishes, never grows or increases; but is always the same.

God's ability to perform miracles never changes, but His desire to may change. He does only as He pleases! (Ps. 115:3, 135:6; Is. 14:24, 27).

"Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, today, and forever."
This describes His character and will. He never changes, but His methods of dealing with men may.
(Just because He spoke to the apostles with an audible voice, does not mean that this is His mode for today.)

3) God's power is inexhaustible

God's power never diminishes (He never loses strength).

Is. 40:28 - "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

"Since He has at His command all the power in the universe, the Lord God omnipotent can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished. His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for a renewal of strength. All the power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished fullness in His own infinite being" (Tozer, p. 73).

In other words, God did not have to rest on the seventh day of creation because He had worked up a sweat during the six days previous.

4) God's power is incomparable

Deut. 3:24 - "O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?"

Job said: "The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at His reproof. . . The thunder of His power who can understand?" (Job 26:11, 14).

God is more powerful than the Laws of nature ( ); nature itself (Ps. 147:5); Leviathan (Job 41:10); all the inhabitants of the earth (Is.

40:22); none can compare with Him (Jer. 10:6).

God's power is unleashed when He speaks (Gen. 1:1ff; Ps. 29:3-5; 46:6; 33:9 - "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.").

"Before man can work, he must have both tools and materials, but God began with nothing, and by His word alone out of nothing made all things" (Pink, p. 48).

ILLUS: The power of Christ's words.

5) God's power is <u>boundless</u>
(It knows <u>no limits</u> outside of God)
Job 42:2 - "I know that Thou canst do everything."
(Gen. 18:14; Luke 1:37 - Miraculous birth)
Nothing can hinder God's power.
Isaiah 43:13 - "Yea, before the day was, I am He; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

Nothing is too hard for God to do (Jer. 32:17, 27 - "Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee;" . . . "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?").

God's might is unleashed according to His wisdom ("Wisdom and might are His" (Daniel 2:20).

God's power is <u>not</u> unrestrained, out of control, irrational, uncontrollable force. He controls the exercise of His might. When He chooses to demonstrate it, He does!

God is able to do all that is consistent with His <u>character</u> and <u>will</u>.

<u>All</u> limitations upon God are <u>self-limitations</u>.

God cannot do that which is contrary to His <u>character</u> (holy nature) -

1) God cannot <u>lie</u> (Titus 1:2).
2) God cannot <u>tempt</u> men to do evil (James 1:13).
3) God cannot <u>deny</u> Himself (II Tim. 2:13).

God cannot do that which is contrary to His <u>will</u> (purpose, plan, or desire) -

"God <u>can</u> do all He <u>wills</u> to do;
He <u>will</u> not do all He <u>can</u>."

C. Praise His <u>Permanence</u>

"was..is..is to come" - God is eternal!

a. <u>Definition</u> of God's Eternal Nature
   1) "Eternal" refers to the fact that God exists <u>endlessly</u>. He is without beginning or end; but has existed in eternity past and will exist in eternity future.
   2) The attribute of "eternity" is closely associated with God's attribute of "self-existence." "If God exists endlessly, then He never came into existence nor was He ever caused to come into existence. He had no <u>starting point</u> and will have no ending point.

b. <u>Names & Descriptions</u> which Reflect God's Eternal Nature
   1) *El Olam* (the everlasting God) (Gen. 21:33)
   2) *Alpha and Omega* (" - T) (Rev. 1:11; 21:6; 22:13)
   3) *I AM* (Exod. 3:14)
   4) *The Ancient of Days* (Dan. 7:9, 13, 22)
      (Note: God is viewed with white hair, depicting His ancientness)

c. <u>Scriptural Statements</u> of God's Eternal Nature
   1) *"From <u>everlasting to everlasting</u> Thou art God"* (Ps. 90:2)
   2) *"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth <u>eternity</u>, whose name is holy. . ."* (Is. 57:15)
   3) *"The <u>eternal</u> God is thy refuge, and underneath are the <u>everlasting</u> arms"* (Deut. 33:27)
   4) Creation manifests God's *"<u>eternal</u> power and Godhead"* (Rom. 1:20)
   5) *"Now unto the King <u>eternal</u>, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory <u>forever and ever</u>. Amen."* (I Tim. 1:17)
   6) *"The <u>everlasting</u> God"* (Gen. 21:33)
   7) *"Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from <u>everlasting</u>"* (Ps. 93:2)
   8) *"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding."*
   9) *"Art Thou not from <u>everlasting</u>, O LORD my God, mine Holy One?"* (Hab. 1:12)
   10) *". . . According to the commandment of the <u>everlasting</u> God"* (Rom. 16:26)

c. Special Features of God's Eternal Nature

1) God is in no way bound or limited by time.
"One day is with the Lord as [just like] a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8).

2) God's existence cannot be measured by time. He always was and He always will be. He exists independently of time.

Note: Eternity is distinct from time (as we know time). "Eternity" must not be conceived as simply time without end (an endless succession of moments). Eternity is a dimension distinct from time.

Before God created the sun, moon, and the orbit of the earth (features by which we measure time), He existed; and after *"time shall be no more"* and the constellations no more give us time measurements (since they will be done away with - Is. 60:19), He will exist as eternity goes on.

God is the Author of time; His existence cannot be measured by time.

When God uses "time words" such as "day and night" to describe eternal reality, it is to help us grasp truth in relation to our time not His time in Heaven (Rev. 4:8; 7:15; 14:11; 20:10).

3) God will never cease to exist
(This gives comfort and security, knowing that He will always be in control.)

4) God's Kingdom will never end (Is. 9:7; Dan. 2:44; Lk. 1:33)
Note: The Millennium is simply the first stage of Christ's eternal rule.

II. God is worthy of your praise because of <u>WHAT HE HAS DONE</u> (v. 11)
(His Actions)

4:9

"Glory" - to give credit where credit is due.

"Honor" - to view as priceless; beyond value.

"Thanks - to show appreciation.

"Thanks" - one of the first words we appreciation hearing from our children is "thank you" (which at first sounds something like "Dit-do").

How could we be so ungrateful?
4:10
The four beasts give the cue (v. 9), and in succession the 24 elders fall down to worship (v. 10)

NOTE: In Rev. 4, the praise goes to God as <u>creator</u> (v. 11); in Rev. 5, the praise goes to God as <u>Redeemer</u> (v. 9ff).

Essentials to True Worship:

A. A deep sense of one's own <u>unworthiness</u> (v. 10

"Cast their crowns" - depicts an attitude of unworthiness to wear the crowns. They view themselves as not worthy of recognition or honor. All honor goes to the Lord.

B. A recognition that God is <u>worthy of all</u> praise (v. 11a)

"Worship" = an old English word that meant worth-ship. To ascribe <u>worth</u> to one.

God is worthy; only God is worthy ("worship <u>God</u>" - Rev. 19:10; 22:9).

Sinful man tends to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator (Rom. 1:25).

C. A desire to bring to God the <u>pleasure</u> that is due Him (v. 11b)

God created all things for himself.

Romans 11:36
For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

Col. 1:16
For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

"The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. 15:8)

"Pleasure" - will or desire"

God created man (and all of creation) to bring pleasure to Himself (We accomplish his by fulfilling His will - I Th. 5:18)

All creation exists presently ("they are" - present tense) to fulfill God's desires.

Make this your goal!

If the heavens declare God's glory (Ps. 19:1), why shouldn't God's people?

Cp. Triumphal Entry (Lk. 19:37-40) - "The stones would immediately cry out"

CONCLUSION:

Ps. 50:23 - "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me."

Heb. 13:15 - "The sacrifice of praise"

Suggestions:

1. Have a time set apart for praise
2. Have a praise party at your home
3. When you sing hymns, praise Him!
4. Praise Him before others!