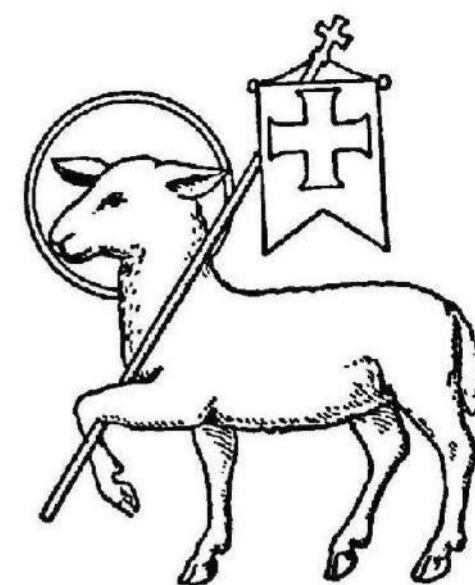


THE BOOK OF REVELATION

11. The worship of heaven



Introduction: The Choice

- Revelation's message: Jesus will return, God will fix everything that is wrong; evil will be banished and God's people vindicated and rewarded.
- The 1st century choice: worship the Emperor or God (or Jesus) (2:13; 2:20)
- The end time choice: Satan/Antichrist or God (or Jesus) (13:3-4; 14:11)

Worship: the main theme of Revelation

- Who or what do we worship and how do we express that?
- On five different occasions the veil of heaven is lifted (4:1-5; 6:9-11; 7:9-17; 14:1; 19:1-10)
- God's present reign; victory over Satan and evil celebrated through heavenly hymns.

Who will worship there?

- Thousand times ten thousand angels (5:11)
- The twenty four elders and the four 'creatures' (4:4-11; 7:11-12)
- The righteous of Israel in Old Testament and the Tribulation (7:4-8; 14:1-5)
- The redeemed people of God 'a great multitude no one can number' (5:9; 7:9-10)
- All of creation (5:13; Isaiah 45:23; Phil 2:10-11)

Victory songs

- From an early perspective the world seems to be in chaos and controlled by evil (6-18)
- The victory of the Lamb (11:15-18; 12:10-12; (15:3-4; 16:5-7; 19:1-5)
- The success of the Gospel (5:9)
- The martyrs have conquered (7:14-17)
- New songs and musical accompaniment (14:2-3)

Different words used for worship in Revelation

- **Worship.** (*proskuneo*), the most important Greek verb for worship, which is more than any other New Testament book. The worship of both God (4:10; 5:14; 7:11; 11:1, 16; 14:7; 15:4; 19:4, 10; 22:9) and Christ (5:14; 15:4)
- **Glory.** There are numerous references to giving God glory (*doxa*) 1:6; 4:9, 11; 5:12, 13; 7:12; 11:13; 14:7; 15:4; 16:9; 19:7)
- **Honour.** (*timae*) 4:9, 11; 5:12-13; 7:12)
- **Blessing** (*ulogia*) (5:12, 13; 7:12) praise and laud. (Eulogy)
- **Serve.** (*latreo*) meaning "to worship" or "to serve" (7:15; 22:3),
- **Praise.** (*aineo*) meaning "to praise" (19:5),
- **Thanksgiving.** (*eucharistia*) meaning "thanksgiving" (4:9; 7:12; 11:17).
- **Fall down.** (*pipto*) in the sense of "to fall down" in obeisance and honour before God (4:10; 5:14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4) and Christ (1:17; 5:8, 14).

Priests

- All the redeemed have a priestly ministry now (1:6; 5:10)
- No temple in heaven as God is everywhere (21:3; 21:22)
- His servants will 'serve' him (22:5) '*latreō*' special function of the priests.
- 'The Priesthood of all believers' now (1 Peter 2:9)

All are called to worship

- The everlasting Gospel (6-7)
- Evangelism is a call to worship the living true God as opposed to the idols of self and society.
- After the final defeat of Babylon (19:5)

Worship

- A lifestyle, not just isolated liturgical acts. One either has the mark of God or the mark of the beast, and from this we worship one or the other by our lives (3:12; 7:3; 9:4; 14:1)
- Jesus is to be worshipped as God (5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9)
- The mystery of God 'the one seated on the throne' – never named and never described!
- Elements of worship in Revelation: amens, antiphonal singing, doxologies, gifts (crowns placed before the throne), hymns, incense, maranathas, palm branches, prayers, prostration, white robes, sacred meals, shouts of celebration, silence, thanksgiving, trumpet-blowing, victory songs.

Worship in the Church now

- A rehearsal for the future. "The goal of worship is, 'on earth as it is in heaven'".
- Different worship styles and preferences, based on denomination, temperament, musical tastes.
- The basic choice: The Book of Acts or the Book of Revelation?

Revelation and present worship

- Early Church in New Testament (Acts and Epistles) : As Jews they worshipped in the temple and synagogue on the Sabbath (Acts 3:1) and on Sundays and mid-week as Christians in homes (Acts 20:7) Worship was a combination of liturgy and free prayer (Acts 2:42)
- By 2nd – 6th centuries worship developed in a more ritualised and liturgical way to include selective elements of Old Testament worship as the continuation of Israel.
- The Cathedral of Hagia Sophia (Holy Wisdom) in Constantinople in 537AD.
- The Eucharist and the 'Marriage Supper of the Lamb' (18:7; 9)
- The structure of the Eucharist reflecting elements in Revelation (see Appendix)

The structure of the Eucharist reflecting elements in the Book of REVELATION

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST	THE BOOK OF REVELATION
General	
White robes	3:5; 3:18; 4:4; 7:9; 7:13; 19:8;
Incense	24 elders and 4 creatures (5:8; 8:3-4)
Singing	7:12; 11:17;
Candles and candlesticks	Golden lampstands 1:12; 20; 2:1; 11:4
Altars	6:9; 8:3; 8:5; 16:7;
Priests	Made us a kingdom of priests 1:6; 5:10; 20:6
Feast/food (bread & wine)	13:20; 19:7 & 9
Palm branches on Palm Sunday	7:9
"Amen"	1:7; 5:14; 19:4; 22:21.
"Hallelujah"	19:1, 3, 4, 6
The Liturgy	
Trinitarian Greeting	Him who was, is, is to come; the seven spirits (sevenfold); Jesus Christ. 1:4-5
Confession	Specific things for Christians to repent of: 2:45; 2:14-16; 2:20-240 etc.
Absolution	1:6 'to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins.'
Gloria	Glory to God 4:11; 5:12-13; 7:12;
Readings (in general)	The lector & listener 1:3
Old Testament (Israel: Law & Prophets)	Prophets (21:12); The Song of Moses (15:3); ark of the covenant (11:19) Daniel (1:12-16)
Epistle	Letters to the seven churches (2-3)
Gospel	The eternal Gospel (14:6)
Silence (to pause and reflect)	8:1
Creed / Affirmation	1:7-8; 1:17-18; 4:11; 5:9; 7:15-17;
Prayers of intercession	Prayers of the saints (4:8) How long O Lord (6:9-11)
Offertory	The elders cast their crowns before the throne 4:10; kings bring their best (21:24)
Eucharistic Prayer	
Praise for creation	54:11; 10:6; 14:7;
Praise for redemption	1:6; 5:9; 5:11;
Sanctus	Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. 4:8
Anamnesis (remembering Calvary)	1:18; 5:6; 5:9;
The mystery of faith	1:18; 7; was dead, am alive, coming soon
The offering of our lives	21:26; 22:12
The Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)	5:6; 7:17; 12:11; 17:14;
The bread of the Eucharist 'holy mystery'	2:17 'the hidden manna'
Invitation	The Spirit and the bride say 'Come' 22:17
Blessing	22:21