

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Revelation 4

Revelation 4: God Worshiped by 24 and More

Dr. Mark Alan Langner



Welcome to In-Person and Online Audiences: My name is Mark Langner.

In the past three weeks, we have primarily discussed the Person of Jesus Christ and His Church. Now we move forward into a different part of Jesus's message to John and the Seven Churches. I believe these messages apply to all churches of all time.

Songs of the Apocalypse

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| The Anthem of the Triune God 4:8 | The Antiphonal Amen 7:12 |
| The Creation Hymn 4:11 | The Kingdom Carol 11:15 |
| The New Song of Redemption 5:9-10 | The Psalm of Judgment 11:17-18 |
| The Angels' Chorale 5:12 | The Shout of the Overcomers 12:10-12 |
| The Crescendo of the Universe 5:13-14 | The Song of Moses and the Lamb 15:3-4 |
| The Martyrs' Canticle 6:10 | The Hallelujah Chorus 19:1-4 |
| The Song of Salvation 7:10 | The Symphony of the Marriage Feast 19:6-7 |

-Robert Coleman as related by Ed Hindson



Revelation is a vision of worship. In the first three chapters, Jesus's affirmations, rebukes, and rewards seemingly demand an answer to this question:

Who will we worship?

"We were made to worship, and we will always find a way to worship something."

-J. Scott Duvall

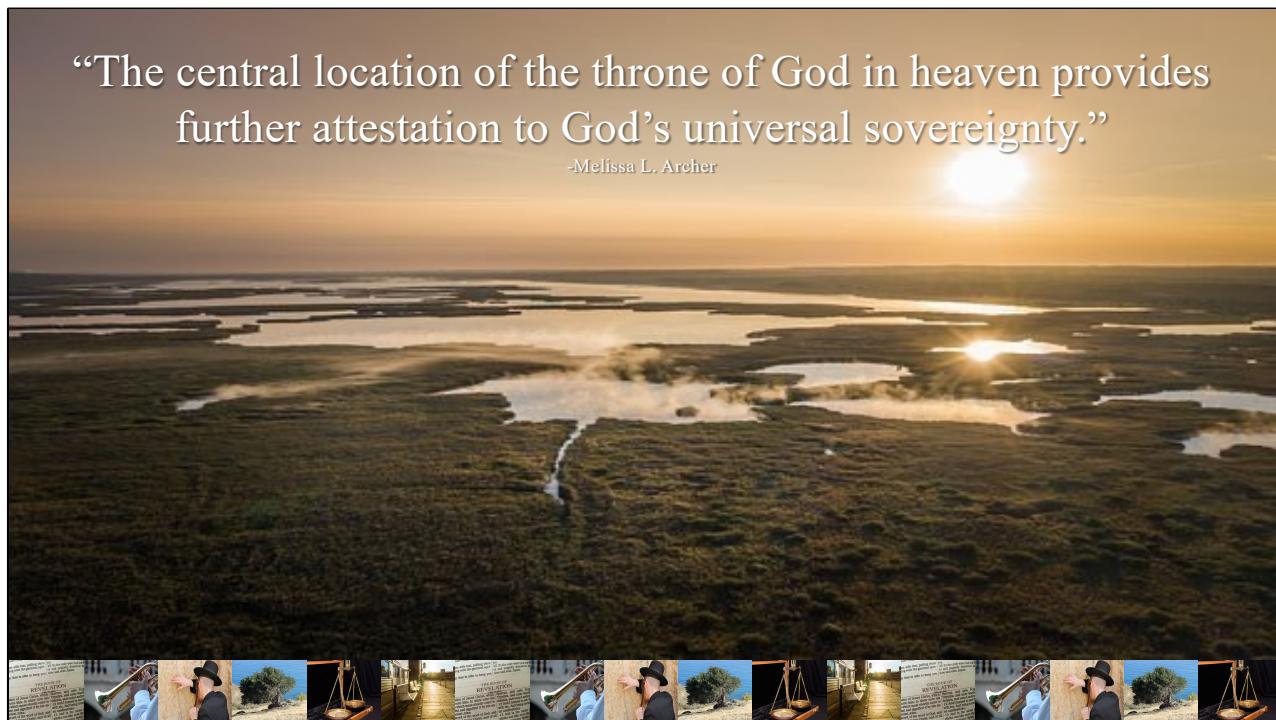
Whereas in the first three chapters of Revelation, Jesus speaks to earthly churches, chapters 4-5 introduce a pivot to a heavenly vision; an obvious turn in the story.

These chapters also include the introduction to a central theme: worship through song.

Five of the fourteen Songs of the Apocalypse are found right here in these two chapters, and their focus is central to our reason for being: **to worship God and His Christ in Spirit and in truth.**

“The central location of the throne of God in heaven provides further attestation to God’s universal sovereignty.”

-Melissa L. Archer



We will also note the holiness of these chapters, and that the *location* changes.

Remember, it is always important to understand the *location* of the action to, in turn, understand the *purpose* of the passage.

Read Archer quote.

Before we move on into Chapters four and five, it should be noted that Jesus’s vision offers a reminder that those who turn to Him, who open the doors to their hearts, receive His grace: “See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

“...The message is near you, in your mouth and in your heart. This is the message of faith that we proclaim. If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and once confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame,’ since there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:8b-13).

We are holy solely through the grace of Jesus Christ. We are to entirely live for Him.

4:1 After this I looked, and there in heaven was an open door. The first voice that I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”



There is no mention of the Church from Revelation 4:1 through 19:7. Even the word “church” does not appear again until 22:16, indicative of the present church’s absence during the Seventieth Week of Daniel (the Tribulation)..



Notice a similar call to John that we once read in Exodus (19:24, 24:12, 34:2), when Moses is called to the mountain in order to receive a revelation from God. Here, John is taken into Heaven to observe the plans for the end times.

Μετὰ ταῦτα
“After these things”



“This is the key *turning point* in the Apocalypse.”
-Ed Hindson



This phrase, “After these things” (“After this”), is *the* key turning point in Revelation, turning from the past and the present to Heaven and the future of the Earth. It opens the door to God the Creator in Chapter 4, and then to Christ the Redeemer in Chapter 5 (Genesis 1-3; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16).

The Story of the Doors

Revelation 3:7-8

Jesus Opens and Closes the Door
(Keys of David)

Revelation 3:20

Open Door of Christ to All
(Those Who Accept Christ Are His Church)

Revelation 4:1

Wide Open Door for the Churches to
Vision of Heavenly Realm



This third door is indicative of God's plan to enlighten the Church to the future of Heaven and Earth, to witness His majesty, to worship His Son. The command in Daniel 12:4 to "seal the book" is seemingly overwhelmed here in Revelation 4 by Jesus's timing to John (God's timing is His, and His alone). The door is now open, and much of Daniel's vision will be revealed to John via Jesus's Revelation.

Glimpses of Heaven have previously occurred as God allowed: (Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1:1; Matthew 3:16; Acts 7:56; Acts 10:11).

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, seated on a high and lofty throne, and the hem of his robe filled the temple (Isaiah 6:1).

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit, and there was a throne in heaven and someone was seated on it. **3** The one seated there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian stone. A rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald surrounded the throne.



Isaiah 11:2; Exodus 25:31-40; 40:4, 24-25

The Spirit of the LORD; The Spirit of Wisdom; The Spirit of Understanding; The Spirit of Counsel; The Spirit of Strength; The Spirit of Knowledge; The Spirit of the Fear of the LORD.

We find here suggestions of the presence of the Spirit of God in complete communion with the Father; the Shekinah glory of the LORD; the illumination of God's continual presence, and; the true light of Jesus Christ.



At Pentecost, Peter quoted the prophet Joel and said: "And it will be' in the last days, says God, that 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. I will even pour out my Spirit on my servants in those days, both men and women, and they will prophesy. I will display wonders in the heaven' above 'and signs on the earth' below: 'blood and fire and a cloud of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

John was in the Spirit, baptized (filled by the Spirit) in this vision, and he beheld the glory of God in His splendor. What a privilege for the old Apostle of Jesus Christ. What majesty he witnessed on this day.



“In the Spirit” conveys: (1) Close connection between Jesus and the Holy Spirit; (2) Continuity between Chapters 1-4; (3) Something new is about to take place (location marker); (4) Connection between John’s being in the Spirit and his geographical location.



Jasper was a translucent rock crystal similar to a diamond.
Carnelian (*sardio*) was a fiery red.
First and last precious stones in the high priest’s breastplate.



The emerald rainbow is perhaps a reminder that regardless of the judgment mentioned in the Revelation, there is still mercy available from the One who will soon pour out His wrath. It is also a reminder of God’s faithfulness: this judgment will not be that of a global flood.



4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones sat twenty-four elders dressed in white clothes, with golden crowns on their heads.



Who Are the 24 of Revelation 4:4?

Some believe the number 24 suggests a reference to the division of the priesthood (1 Chronicles 24:4-6).

Some believe these are twelve representatives of the Tribes of Israel and the twelve Apostles of Jesus.

Some believe the number is indicative of the promise to overcomers in Revelation 3:21.



Crowns mentioned in the New Testament include (1) Imperishable Wreath (1 Corinthians 9:25);
(2) Crown of Life (James 1:12); (3) Crown of Exultation (1 Thess. 2:19-20);
(4) Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:1-4), and: (5) Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8).
– David Jeremiah



For those who suggest that these 24 groupings were based on the division of the priesthood, these would have derived through Aaron's two surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar.

Assuming twelve are of the tribes of Israel and twelve are the Apostles, there are some who believe Matthias is the 12th Apostle (others believe it is Paul).

5 Flashes of lightning and rumblings and peals of thunder came from the throne. Seven fiery torches were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. **6** Something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal, was also before the throne...



The Sea often confers negative images in Scripture, but here seems to reflect the glory of God Himself.



Lightning and thunder apparently represent the divine majesty, awesomeness, and power of God the Father (Exodus 20:18).



...Four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back were around the throne on each side. ⁷The first living creature was like a lion; the second living creature was like an ox; the third living creature had a face like a man; and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ⁸Each of the four living creatures had six wings; they were covered with eyes around and inside. Day and night they never stop, saying,

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God, the Almighty,
who was, who is, and who is to come.



Revelation 1:8: “I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord God, ‘the One who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.’”

Lion – Fierce

Eagle – Magnificent

Ox – Valued Domestic Worker

Humans – Ruled Them All

Their cry seems to underscore the holiness of God Almighty, and likewise conveys the truth of The Trinity.

Some early writers believed the creatures to be a depiction of Christ, but their six-winged nature and cry of “Holy, Holy, Holy” seems more indicative of Seraphim. –Isaiah 6:2-3

The Seraphim’s eyes apparently indicate wisdom, proximity to the throne, and the desire to carry out God’s will and judgment as He alone determines.

“Their faces looked something like the face of a human, and each of the four had the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle.”

– Ezekiel 1:10



Ezekiel 1:1-10; 10:12: Similarities to Ezekiel’s vision attest to the truthfulness and reliability of both visions, each man being granted a vision of Heaven’s Throne Room by God; each man seeing the Seraphim surrounding the Throne of God.

“Each creature went straight ahead. Wherever the Spirit wanted to go, they went without turning as they moved” (Ezekiel 10:12). The Trinitarian doctrinal truth of God the, Father, Son, and Spirit, functioning in absolute and complete unity, is found here in Revelation 4-5, reiterated in the earlier message of Ezekiel.

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the one seated on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall down before the one seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever.

They cast their crowns before the throne and say,

11 Our Lord and God,
you are worthy to receive
glory and honor and power,
because you have created all things,
and by your will
they exist and were created.



The 24 elders' initial response from the creatures' songs was to fall and worship God.

Jews and Christians have worshiped through the Psalms for centuries. All Psalm types (Worship, Messianic, Hymn, Ethics, Thanksgiving, Lament, Wisdom, Confidence, Remembrance, Imprecatory, Penitential, Creation) are seemingly included in the Revelation.

The 24 elders focus entirely on the worth of God, casting their crowns before Him!



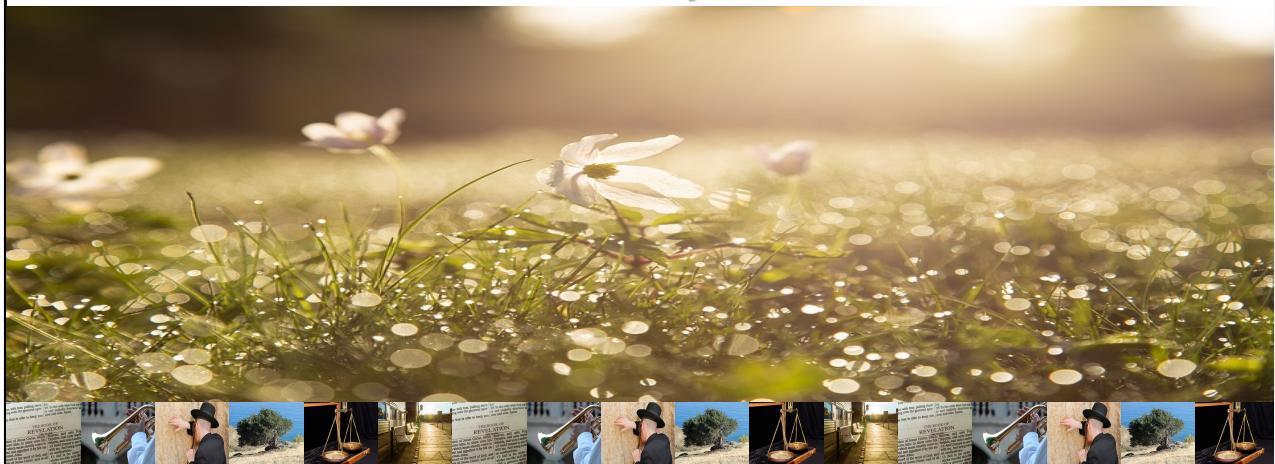
Psalms types, examples, and definitions:

- 1) Worship (e.g., 40): psalms which worship of the Most High God.
- 2) Messianic (e.g., 2, 89, 110): psalms of the Messiah, the Christ (Jesus our Lord).
- 3) Hymn (e.g., 29): psalms in praise of God.
- 4) Ethics (e.g., 15): psalms of those who live after God's heart and values.
- 5) Thanksgiving (e.g., 100): psalms of thanksgiving.
- 6) Lament (e.g., 69): psalms of sorrow and remorse.
- 7) Wisdom (e.g., 1, 37): psalms of wisdom, of instruction.
- 8) Confidence (e.g., 16, 23): psalms of confidence in God, in His character.
- 9) Remembrance (e.g., 135): psalms conveying that God remembers His people.
- 10) Imprecatory (e.g., 1:4-6; 69) psalms of vengeance and desire for justice.
- 11) Penitential (e.g., 51): psalms of repentance.
- 12) Creation (e.g., 8, 19, 33, 104): psalms acknowledging and praising God's creation.

As you read and study Revelation, look for similarities to those from the Psalms.

“Genesis’s creation narrative is crystal clear; God is eternal and preeminent, humankind is made in his image, and all nature results from God’s spoken word. Christocentric truth bursts forth from the opening words of creation, reality transcended by the Son of God.”

-Mark Alan Langner



There is an incredible bridge from Genesis to Revelation: God is *directly* due “glory and honor and power” because He is the creator of “all things.” It was by God’s will that all things exist. We are created for the pleasure and glory of God! These lives are not our own (Ephesians 1:3-13; Philippians 2:13).

Colossians 1:16: “For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through him and for him.”



We Are Designed to Reflect our Savior

-Psalm 8

Five Applications from Revelation 4

1. God is in Control
2. God is to be Praised
3. God is Holy
4. God Delights in Worship
5. God as Creator is Worthy of Worship



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Revelation 5

Revelation 5: Jesus the Lamb Alive

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Let's Practice Our Revelation Rhymes

Revelation Chapter 1: A Picture of the Eternal Son

Revelation Chapter 2: Work of the Church to Do

Revelation Chapter 3: Where Should Our Church Be?

Revelation Chapter 4: God Worshiped By 24 and More

Revelation Chapter 5: Jesus the Lamb Alive



Songs of the Apocalypse

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-Robert Coleman as related by Ed Hindson



5 Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides, sealed with seven seals. **2** I also saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” **3** But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or even to look in it. **4** I wept and wept because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or even to look in it. **5** Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Look, the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

“Then a shoot will grow up from the stump of Jesse...”

“...I am about to bring my servant, the Branch.”

“...Here is a man whose name is Branch...”

-Isaiah 11:1a; Zechariah 3:8c, 6:12b.

9 Judah is a young lion—
my son, you return from the kill.
He crouches; he lies down like a
lion
or a lioness—who dares to rouse
him?

10 The scepter will not depart from
Judah
or the staff from between his feet
until he whose right it is comes
and the obedience of the peoples
belongs to him.

CSB: Genesis 49:9-10



9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the
prey, my son, thou art gone up: he
stooped down, he couched as a
lion, and as an old lion; who shall
rouse him up?

10 The sceptre shall not depart
from Judah, nor a lawgiver from
between his feet, until Shiloh
come; and unto him shall the
gathering of the people be.

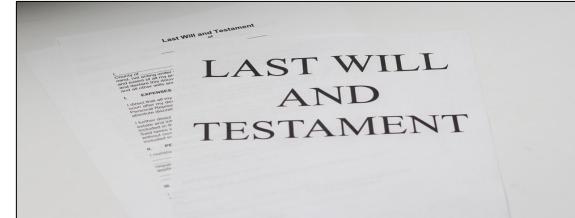
KJV: Genesis 49:9-10



What About the Scroll?

Some believe the scroll is the...

Law
Gospel
New Covenant
Book of Life
Decrees of God
Plan of Redemption



Divine Decrees and Sovereign Plan of God for the End Days



Legal documentations of the time were reportedly sealed. This scroll contained enough information that both sides contained writing: such documents are called opistographs.

It was sealed with seven seals, perhaps another reminder of Daniel 12:4 in which the vision to Daniel was sealed.

Roman versions of such documents were held by emperors as a show of authority and judgment. THIS document was much more authoritative: it *the Son alone was worthy to take it from the Father.*

“Then I saw one like a slaughtered lamb standing in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth. 7 He went and took the scroll out of the right hand of the one seated on the throne.

The Warrior Lamb of God...

Genesis 22:8

Exodus 12:5

Isaiah 53:7

John 1:29

1 Peter 1:19

Revelation 5:6, 12

Revelation 7:17, 13:8, 22:1, 3



Matthew 28:18 notes this: All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.”

And praise the Lord, this verse also establishes Jesus's authority, even over our own sin: “But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins’ – then he told the paralytic, ‘Get up, take your stretcher and go home’” (Matthew 9:6).

The right hand is one of prestigious honor: it is the hand that held the scroll.

The horns here perhaps represent the fulness of divine power (horns are associated with power in Scripture).

The Spirit of the LORD;
The Spirit of Wisdom;
The Spirit of Understanding;
The Spirit of Counsel;
The Spirit of Strength;
The Spirit of Knowledge;
The Spirit of the Fear of the LORD.

“When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased.””



“...Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Genesis 1:1-2, 3:15; 22:2, 12-14, 17-18; Isaiah 12:1; Matthew 3:16-17, 1:20b-21, 4:1; Luke 2:25-32, 36-38, 39-40, 49-50, 52



Jesus constantly operated in the Spirit on Earth, and He and the Spirit are in constant communion with the Father.

8 When he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and golden bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the saints. **9** And they sang a new song:

You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slaughtered,
and you purchased people
for God by your blood
from every tribe and language
and people and nation.
10 You made them a kingdom
and priests to our God,
and they will reign on the earth.

"and through him to reconcile everything to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:20).

"keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and the perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

"To him who loves us and has set us free from our sins by his blood, and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father – to him be glory and dominion forever and forever. Amen" (Revelation 1:5b-6).

Jesus's atonement – His redemptive work on the Cross – was not just for the Jews, but for every group on the Earth.

“For God so loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Anyone who believes in him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God.”

“The Lord does not delay his promise as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.”

John 3:16-18; 2 Peter 3:9, 10-13, 18



11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels around the throne, and also of the living creatures and of the elders. Their number was countless thousands, plus thousands of thousands.

They said with a loud voice,
Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered
to receive power and riches
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and blessing!



There are more than one hundred million angels noted here.

For the only time in Scripture, the angels were described to be singing. Their song was *about* Jesus, the Holy and Worthy Lamb of God!

13 I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea,
and everything in them say,

Blessing and honor and glory and power
be to the one seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb, forever and ever!

14 The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and
worshiped.



“Blessing and honor and glory and power be to the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb, forever and ever!”



Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Holy, holy is He
Sing a new song to Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Holy, holy is He
Sing a new song to Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings
You are my everything and I will adore You
Clothed in rainbows of living color
Flashes of lighting rolls of thunder
Blessing and honor strength and glory and power be
To You the only wise King

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings
You are my everything and I will adore You
Filled with wonder awestruck wonder
At the mention of Your name
Jesus Your name is power, breath and living water
Such a marvelous mystery
Oh, You're worthy, mystery
You are worthy
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings
You are my everything and I will adore You, I will adore
You

Lyrics by Jennie Lee Riddle; Released by Phillips, Craig & Dean on *Fearless* album.

