

## The Divine Judge (Part II)

*Revelation 4:6-11*

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Introduction: We saw last Sunday morning a depiction of God's holiness. We examined God's Sovereignty, His Splendor, His Subjects, & His Spirit. Consider in these remaining verses, first the declaration of God's holiness by the four living creatures, & then the demonstration of God's holiness by the twenty-four elders.

[Last week: I. The Depiction of God's Holiness (4:1-5)]

### II. The **Declaration** of God's Holiness (Its recognition) (:6-9)

- A. The description of the four living creatures (:6-8) [ "*beasts*" - Greek word zoon, meaning 'living one', from which we get 'zoo' & 'zoology.' Note, "*beast*" of 13:1, is "therion" (wild animal).]

[ "*The sea of glass like unto crystal*" separates the throne from all around it. It is suggested to be the floor of God's throne; not a "sea" of water, but that which is as solid as crystal. "The glories light that comes from the throne will be reflected in the sea & will be an overwhelming sight" (Custer). It could be compared to the sea of brass of the Tabernacle (Ex. 30:17-21) or Temple (I Kgs. 7:23), known as the 'laver,' & therefore representing fore representing the cleansing power of God's Word.]

1. "*Full of eyes*" - able to see in all directions; nothing escapes their notice.
2. "*Six wings*" - compare the seraphim of Isaiah 6:2-3 & Ezekiel 1:10.
3. Distinguished by their faces: lion, calf, man & eagle.
4. Ministers before the throne of God.

- B. The identification of the four living creatures (:7-8) [four interpretations]

1. Representation of the attributes or qualities of God; His omniscience, omnipresence, etc.).
2. Presentation of the four Gospels.
  - a. The lion: Christ as King of the Jews in Matthew.
  - b. The ox (calf): Christ as Servant of Jehovah in Mark.
  - c. The man: Christ as Son of Man in Luke.
  - d. The eagle: Christ as Son of God in John.
3. Identification with Israel & their camp (one tribe on each of 4 sides).
  - a. Lion - Judah
  - b. Ox - Ephraim
  - c. Man - Reuben
  - d. Eagle - Dan
4. Explanation simply: they are angels.
  - a. Likeness to the seraphim of Isaiah 6:2-3.
  - b. Both (living creatures & seraphim) ascribe holiness to God.
  - c. Compare to the cherubim: each one had 4 faces (man, lion, ox, and eagle).
  - d. "Their presence in the heavenly scene contributed much to the overall impression of the majesty, holiness, sovereignty, & eternity of God" (Walvoord).

- C. The occupation of the four living creatures (:8-9)

1. They ascribe holiness to God (:8).

"The connection of the three-times repeated 'Holy!' to the past, present, & future work of the triune God is evident. God is perfectly holy in His work of creation, His work of redemption, & His work of consummation" (H. Morris).

2. They give glory to God (:9) – “To give glory to God is to praise & glorify Him” (Custer).
3. They give honor to God (:9) - word meaning 'value' - "He is all-worthy."
4. They give thanks to God (:9) - for their creation & preservation – “It is noteworthy that the last three references in the Bible to thanksgiving all apply to this throne-room in heaven (4:9; 7:12; & 11:17)” (H. Morris).

Summary: "It is evident that the living ones are designated to give glory, honor, & thanks to God sitting upon His throne. The emphasis of their praise is on the divine attributes & worthiness of God" (Walvoord).

### III. The **Demonstration** of God's Holiness (Our response) (:10-11)

[By the twenty-four elders who represent the Church]

#### A. **Worship** - "*Thou art worthy*" (worship in our hearts)/

1. "They not only worship & recognize these attributes of God but support their worship by recognition of the fact that God is the sovereign Creator of the universe &, as such, is sovereign over it" (Walvoord).
2. By casting their victors' crowns before Him, they acknowledge that it has been God's grace, salvation, & goodness that has enabled them to be victorious. ("Their faithfulness has been made possible by His faithfulness" H. Morris.)

#### B. **Praise** - "*to receive glory, honour, & power*" (praise with our lips).

Literally: the glory, the honour, the power.

#### C. **Thanksgiving** - "*for thou hast created...*" (thanks by our lives).

1. God's **work** of creation: "*for thou hast created all things.*" He is our Creator.
2. God's **will** for creation: "*for thy pleasure*" (cf. Isaiah 43:7). He is our Redeemer. "Before God can be truly known as Redeemer, He must first be believed & acknowledged as Creator." (H. Morris)
3. God's **worship** by creation: "*every knee shall bow...*" (Phil. 2:10-11 & see 4:10, "*fall down before Him...*"). He is our Sovereign.

**Conclusion:** The world today does not honor God as Sovereign Lord & our Creator. “One of the important aims of the Book of Revelation is to trace the Divine movement of history toward the goal of universal recognition of God” (Walvoord). Do you acknowledge God as your Creator this morning? He Who is our Creator desires to be our Redeemer. He is our Sovereign, & is therefore worthy of our worship, praise, & thanksgiving. If we really believe we were created by Him & for Him, we will render our lives to His service, surrender our wills to His will, & strive to live holy, as He is holy. Do we demonstrate our belief in the holiness of God by our worship of Him in our hearts, by our praise of Him with our lips, & by our thanksgiving to Him by our lives? Walvoord writes, "Wise is the soul who finds in the Scriptures the revelation of such a God & who bows now in this day of grace in faith & worship before the God whom he will serve in eternity."

Custer suggests, “These scenes should stir believers to a more serious praise of God in their prayer life. If these living beings (& 24 elders) spend all their time praising God, can we not spend a few minutes each day doing so? When was the last time that you just praised God for Himself & do not present Him with a list of requests?”

“Creation is for God's praise & pleasure, & man has no right to usurp that which rightfully belongs to God. Man plunged creation into sin, so that God's *good* creation (Gen. 1:31) is today a *groaning* creation (Rom. 8:22); but because of Christ's work on the cross, it will one day be delivered and become a *glorious* creation (Rev. 8:18-24)” (Wiersbe).

Will you bow before the Lord in this life, or will you be forced to surrender to Him later? Is it your prayer this morning, “Have thine own way, Lord?”