

Questions About Who are the 24 Mentioned in Revelation 5?

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Who are the 24 elders mentioned in Revelation 5?

Answer:

The **24 elders in Revelation 5** represent a key symbolic group surrounding the throne of God. Let's break it down carefully using Scripture and context.

Biblical Description

In **Revelation 4:4** and **Revelation 5:8–10**, John sees:

“Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.”
— *Revelation 4:4*

In **Revelation 5**, these elders fall before the Lamb and sing:

“You 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*

Who They Likely Are

1. Redeemed Humans, Not Angels

- They wear **white robes** (a symbol of righteousness given to believers — Rev. 3:5).
- They have **crowns** (Greek: *stephanos*, the victor's crown given to the faithful — 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 2:10).
- They sing of being **redeemed by the Lamb's blood** — angels are never described as redeemed.

Therefore, they represent **saved human beings** who have been resurrected or translated and now reign with Christ in heaven.

2. Symbolic of the Firstfruits of Redemption

After Jesus' resurrection, **Matthew 27:52–53** records that “many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised” and appeared in Jerusalem.

Many scholars and early Adventist interpreters believe these resurrected saints **ascended to heaven with Christ** (see *Ephesians 4:8*: “He led captivity captive”).

Thus, these could be representatives of the redeemed — **a heavenly council of firstfruits** of humanity's salvation.

3. Represent the Totality of God's People

The number **24** is not random:

- There were **24 divisions of priests** in the Old Testament (1 Chronicles 24:1–19).
- Together, these 24 served as **representatives** of the entire priesthood before God.

So, the 24 elders could symbolize **all the redeemed of both Old and New Covenants**:

- **12 tribes of Israel** (Old Testament believers)
- **12 apostles of the Lamb** (New Testament believers)

In this sense, they represent the **complete, universal church of the redeemed**.

Summary

Symbol	Meaning
White robes	Righteousness of the saints
Golden crowns	Victory and reward
Thrones	Shared rule with Christ
Song of redemption	They are saved humans
Number 24	Representative fullness of God's people

Conclusion

The 24 elders are **redeemed humans**, likely **representatives of all God's people**—both before and after the cross—who now serve as **a heavenly council around God's throne**. They worship the Lamb as those who personally know redemption, symbolizing **humanity's restored relationship with God** and our future destiny to reign with Christ.