



In the last two contributions to the study of this Fifth chapter we have supplied this picture, which is a good artists impression, describing what John saw in his vision.

As we look at the last few verses of this chapter, we are presented with many praising and worshipping the one on the throne and giving homage.

It is important we do not detach these verses from what has been described. The vision was given as a whole. We have looked at it in four parts.

Let us step back slightly, to ensure we get the whole picture. We imagine the scene in our minds eye. Not all the details in the chapter can be seen in the image above.

John saw on the throne holding a sealed scroll, but then saw one like a Lamb, but described as a Lion, which had been slain but was now alive, had seven horns and seven eyes, take the scroll, and was able to open it, because he was worthy.

Over the throne was a rainbow but looked emerald, and around the throne were four Living Ones, and 24 elders, who had harps and censors in the hands who then bowed down to the Lamb and sang many praises and gave homage.

This vision is specially designed to make us think. The symbols used we have shown in the last three classes all represent aspects of a spiritual nature.

But must remember that this vision John saw, included him in it. He was the one watching, and he wept. He wept because it seemed if no one was qualified to open the sealed scroll

This connects a vision of the future, of those in an immortal state with the life of mortality. There are many features in this vision that show that those who are in an immortal state are very grateful.

There is a phrase which people use rather too much today “eternally grateful” – but this is the exact context when it should be used.

This vision is showing us – how in the Kingdom of God, those who are privileged and honoured to be there, who have proved worthy are eternally grateful to the One who has made it possible for them to be there.

We know that in this world people who come from lowly backgrounds, as soon as they get a bit of success it goes to their head, and they change. They forget their lowly roots, and they get all pompous, and forget how they got to where they are through the help of others. They even turn on their helpers, and they think they are really something special, they get proud, and lifted up and in their new elevated sphere in the heavenly circles they move in high society, they look down scathingly with pity on all those they have left behind. This is a horrible aspect of human nature. But we see it often. Sadly even in people we know well. Let us ensure that we do not have that evil spirit in us.

What we see in this vision, is that those saints who are given immortal life do not forget where they have come from, and they do not forget how they got to where they are. This enables them to be perfect ambassadors and rulers, for the mortal population of the world. Just as Jesus has been the perfect representative for the human race, so his followers will emulate that role in the Kingdom to come.

In this vision we have seen the immortal saints represented as Living Ones, - the Cherubim with aspects of lion, man, eagle and an ox, and which represent various noble characteristics they show in their mortal life.

We see them depicted as 24 elders – that is in a priestly role, but with crowns, showing they have been made kings and priests with the Lord Jesus, but holding harps and censors – again two items which represent prayerfulness and worship – which relate to their behaviour in their mortal life. Their prayers and their songs were heard, and they were heard in that they feared.

The very song they sing – is a new song, a new song in the sense it is refreshing, a celebration of renewal, rather than a song that has never been sung before – the very song they sing, is a celebration of their redemption – again they are looking back, and aware of where they have come from – *you have redeemed us by thy blood....*

These immortal beings thus have their life long forged characteristics sealed, and become part of their locked in features – including humility, empathy, compassion, understanding, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, self control... whilst their earthly bodies have been resurrected and effused with permanent life giving spirit, their minds have also been restored, and as they gather together after receiving the greatest gift ever, the unity of these many minds, restored, from multiple generations, and across multiple centuries and millenia, all are with one mind, and one heart, full of thankfulness and gratefulness.

The verses we are looking at opens in verse 11, with the mention of angels.

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the Living Ones and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Who are these angels? They cannot just be referring to these eternally grateful saints, which are represented by the living ones and the elders, because the angels are described as being additional to them.

They are of course the same angels who have been created by God, to be the extension of His power, the vehicles of His Spirit – as described in the letter to the Hebrews: 1:14:....*ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.*

In verse 6 of the same chapter, we note: 1:6: *And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*

These same angels who rejoiced at the birth of the Lord Jesus, are the same morning stars who sang for joy at the creation, (Job...) will be those who are present at the judgement seat of the saints and the world – see Luke 12:8-9: *Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denies me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.*

They will be part of the tools at the disposal of God as He gives His Son all power to overcome his enemies and establish His Kingdom -

1 Peter 3:22 *Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.*

The angels are not in fact seen in this vision, but only their voice is heard, a voice of a great multitude:

and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand,[In Greek, literally means myriads of myriads] and thousands of thousands;

This is a term that has been used before in the Old Testament in Daniel 7:10: *A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.*

The above are clearly referring to the saints who will be judged, and not the angels.

Maybe what we are being shown here is an equality between the angels and the saints in the Kingdom. It must be noted that the saints once given eternal life will be Elohim – Mighty Ones. As Jesus described in Luke 20:35-36: *But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain the world, and the resurrection from the dead, ... they are equal unto the angels;*

And Paul to the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 6:3: *Know ye not that we shall judge angels?*

One voice in a multitude. I will be Mighty Ones. – Yahweh Elohim. Angels and saints as one. This is a wonderful vision. One could say Mission Accomplished!

But for the sakes of the mortal inhabitants. The lessons need to go on...

Praise given when praise is due:

12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

The song commemorates the sacrifice made – the Lamb – who died, was slain, and rose again – the resurrection from the dead. The One who made it possible through his own blood, who received no praise in his mortal life, only scathing insults from those who thought they were above him. Praise will be a Divinely instituted part of a international program of education of the masses.

13 And every creature [better translated as All Creation] which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

This verse shows how the lesson is not lost, how the teachers of the world, the Kings and Priests, are an extension of Jesus Christ, as the angels were an extension of God, doing his will, and the Will of God, as ambassadors for Christ around the world. For here is described all the mortal inhabitants worshipping and also giving homage.

The four types of inhabitants of the Kingdom are maybe shown here: *is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea* as being 1) immortal saints – in heaven – ruling powers 2) on earth – the nation of Israel – 3) under the earth – the neighbouring states around Israel 4) the rest of the world's Gentiles – the sea

And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that lives for ever and ever.

1 Timothy 1:17: Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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