

Revelation 5:9-12 (ESV) – Heaven: Worship

Main point: Heaven will be filled with glorious music.

Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.



Background: “Woven into the fabric of [Revelation] are around a dozen choruses, both spoken and sung. [T]hese songs [are] written by God himself, and they show us what singing in God’s presence will really be like. And we may be singing some form of these particular choruses forever.”¹

Focus of study:

⁹ And [the 24 elders] sang a new song, saying,
“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation ...”

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands,¹² saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

Questions:

1. *Let’s start by thinking about music. What is the absolute best music you’ve ever heard in your life? What are some of your favorite songs, singers, concerts, or instruments? How do you feel and react when you hear music you love?*
 - a. [spend as much time as you want on these memories ☺]
2. *The book of Revelation gives us several glimpses of the incredible music we’ll enjoy in heaven. Let’s look at three examples. [Reread the first two lines of v. 9.] Who is named in this first group?*
 - a. 24 elders. We don’t know exactly who these 24 elders are, but they’re mentioned a few times in Revelation.²
 - b. *By the way, I wonder why John used the term “elders”? What are elders?*
 - i. Older people – like you! In my mind, “elders” implies wisdom and experience, seeing clearly what matters and what’s true and beautiful.
3. *What are these elders doing?*
 - a. Singing! “The elders sang a new song ...”
4. *[reread v. 11-12] Starting in verse 11, who else is named, and where are they?*
 - a. “I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels ... thousands of thousands.”

¹ <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-soundtrack-of-heaven>

² Rev. 4:4, 5:8-10, 11:16, 19:4. Scholars think the 12 elders may represent the church, or the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles.

5. *What are these thousands and thousands of angels doing?*
 - a. Saying/singing loudly around a throne. *Have you ever been to a huge concert, like in a football stadium, with your favorite musician on stage? What was that sound like?*
6. *[reread v. 13] Then in v. 13, who is the third group?*
 - a. "Every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea."
7. *What are they doing?*
 - a. Again, saying/singing praise.
8. *Wow: We've got elders, angels, and every single creature from everywhere singing and shouting. That's a lot of worship! Who is everyone shouting and singing to?*
 - a. Jesus, the Lamb of God.
 - b. *How do we know they're singing to Jesus? Notice the description of "you":*
 - i. V. 9: "You were slain ..."
 - ii. V. 11: "... the Lamb who was slain ..."
 - iii. V. 13: "... to the Lamb ..."
9. *Why sing to Jesus? What's the repeated theme of this worship?*
 - a. Jesus is WORTHY (v. 9 and 12). *What does it mean to be worthy?*
 - i. Deserving of honor, respect, praise.
10. *What makes Jesus worthy of all this singing and praise?*
 - a. V. 9: "... by your blood you ransomed people for God ..."
11. *What does it mean when you pay a ransom?*
 - a. Someone was a captive or hostage. A ransom is what you pay to set them free.
12. *Who was captive?*
 - a. Us! Faith in Jesus means believing that his death paid our ransom as sinners. As Paul wrote, "The wages [price or ransom] of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."³
13. *Did Jesus pay this ransom for only a specific group or type of people?*
 - a. No; Jesus paid the price for EVERYONE, "... from every tribe and language and people and nation." In heaven, all people of all kinds will be united to praise God.

If you've ever applauded madly at a concert or been part of a huge standing ovation after a musical performance, multiply that by a gazillion to get a sense of this worship. Whenever we sing now in worship and joy, it's preparing us for singing with the multitude of heaven before God forever.

1. Ask for prayer requests for today.
2. Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
3. End with a song – or several! e.g., Amazing Grace, To God Be the Glory, Crown Him with Many Crowns.

³ Romans 6:23

Revelation 5:9-13

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“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its
seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you
ransomed people for God from every tribe and
language and people and nation,
¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to
our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

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of thousands,¹² saying with a loud voice,
“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power
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