99. Nothing relevant to their sphere of responsibility happens without their knowledge because of their "unsleeping watchfulness" (Scott).
100. This is not to attribute to them omniscience such as belongs to God alone, but rather to state that God has created them with super intelligence.

Further Description of the Living Beings (vv. 7-8)

VERSE 7 **The first creature *was* like a lion** *(*καὶ τὸ ζῷον τὸ πρῶτον ὅμοιον λέοντι *[conj kai + art.w/noun nom.nt.s. zoon living creature + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. protos first (of several) + adj.nom.nt.s. homoios resembling + noun dat.m.s. leon lion]***, and the second creature like a calf** *[conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. protos first + noun nom.nt.s. zoon living being + adj.nom.nt.s. homoios resembling + noun dat.m.s. moschos calf; LXX regularly uses this word for a grown bull; cf. Ex.21:36; Lev.22:23]***, and the third creature had a face like that of a man** *[*καὶ τὸ τρίτον ζῷον ἔχων τὸ πρόσωπον ὡς ἀνθρώπου *[conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + noun nom.nt.s. zoon living being + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. echo have + art.w/noun acc.nt.s. prosopon face + comp.adv. hos as + noun gen.m.s. anthropos man]***, and the fourth creature *was* like a flying eagle** *[*καὶ τὸ τέταρτον ζῷον ὅμοιον ἀετῷ πετομένῳ *[conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tetartos fourth + noun nom.nt.s. zoon living being + adj.nom.nt.s. homoios resembling + noun dat.m.s. aetos bird (large), eagle, vulture + pres.dep.part.dat.m.s. petomai fly])***.**

VERSE 8 **And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings** *(*καὶ τὰ τέσσαρα ζῷα, ἓν καθ' ἓν αὐτῶν ἔχων ἀνὰ πτέρυγας ἕξ *[conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tessares four + noun nom.nt.p. zoon living being + adj.nom.nt.s. en one; + prep kata + adj.acc.nt.s. en one; string = "each one" + pro.gen.nt.p. autos him; "of them" + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. echo have + adv ana among + noun acc.f.p. pteruz wing + adj.acc.f.p. hex six]***, are full of eyes around and within** *[*κυκλόθεν καὶ ἔσωθεν γέμουσιν ὀφθαλμῶν *[adv kuklothen on the outside + conj kai + adv esothen within + pres.act.ind.3p. gemo be full, contain + noun gen.m.p. ophthalmos eye]***; and day and night they do not cease to say***[*καὶ ἀνάπαυσιν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς λέγοντες *[conj kai + noun acc.f.s. anapausis interruption, stopping + neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3p. echo have + noun gen.f.s. hemera day + conj kai + noun gen.f.s. nux night + pres.act.part.nom.m.p. lego say]***, " HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *IS THE* LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME** *[*"Αγιος ἅγιος ἅγιος κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ, ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος *[adj.nom.m.s. hagios holy + adj.nom.m.s. hagios holy + adj.nom.m.s. hagios holy + noun nom.m.s. kurios lord + art.w/noun*

*nom.m.s. theos God + art.w/noun nom.m.s. pantokrator almighty, all-powerful, omnipotent + art.nom.m.s. "who" + imperf.act.ind.3s. eimi "was" + conj kai + art.nom.m.s. "who" + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. eimi "is" + conj kai + art.nom.m.s. "who" + pres.dep.part.nom.m.s. erchomai come])***."**

<u>ANALYSIS:</u> VERSES 7 & 8

1. John next lists the facial features of the four living beings.
2. In contrast to Ezekiel's living beings, each one of whom had four facial appearances, each of these four has only one likeness.
3. Though John says in reference to the 3rd being that the similarity applies to the face, it most probably applies to all the four likenesses.
4. Ezekiel's beings resemble human beings in form more generally (cf. Ezek. 1:5).
5. Analogy would imply the same here.
6. The four living beings have already been identified as an exalted angelic order with special relationship to the animate creation.
7. The first "*was* like a lion".
8. Again, this probably relates to the Christological theme of Matthew's gospel in which Christ is presented as the King of the Jews (cf. Rev. 5:5).
9. The lion was the symbol for the ruling tribe of Judah of which Jesus was a member.
10. The second being was "like a calf" (or "ox") which relates to Mark's gospel which features Christ's servant-hood.
11. Regarding the 3rd of the living beings, his appearance is that of "having the face as [that] of a man."
12. The human aspect points to Luke's gospel written to a Greek audience which would have had a frame of reference for the perfect man, so idealized in Greek art and thought.
13. Here then, we have the quintessence of human perfection from the divine viewpoint.
14. The 4th living being is similar to an eagle which relates the gospel that features the deity of Christ, namely John's gospel.
15. The eagle in flight symbolizes the transcendence of deity.
16. These four living beings project the life of Christ on earth as seen from four aspects.
17. Four is the number of universality.
18. The six wings (three pairs) of the four recalls the seraphim of Isaiah's vision (cf. Isa. 6:2).
19. Because specific symbolism for the wings is not stated here, some have supposed that they depict swiftness and unfettered mobility in responding to God's commands (cf. Ps. 18:10; Ezek. 10:16).
20. In Isa. 6:2, two wings covered the face, denoting awe, because they dare not look at God, two covered the feet, denoting humility, because they stand in His presence; and with two they would fly, denoting obedience, because they are ready to carry out His commands.
21. After the parenthetical note about the wings, John continues his observation that "the four living beings…were full of eyes around and within."
22. This is a partial reiteration of v.6 which described the four as being "full of eyes in front and in back."
23. The many eyes signify alertness and intelligence.
24. "Around" and "within" are not precisely contrasting terms.

25. What the expression means is that the living beings had eyes all around their bodies and on the underside of their wings, as suggested by the cherubim of Ezekiel 10:12.
26. "Within" is a new detail added at this point.
27. The particular activity of the living beings is incessant praise before the throne of God.
28. Their continuous praise must be understood in light of their other functions.
29. It is not to be understood that they have no other duties.
30. For example, in Rev. 6:1, 3 5, 7 they are responsible for summoning the riders to advance in portrayal of future events against mankind.
31. This does not violate the statement about ceaseless praise, because "they do not cease" is qualified by the words "by day and night."
32. The manner of expression indicates that it is as type of time expressed rather than the extent of time.
33. It is analogous with Paul's statements to the Thessalonians regarding his own labors to support himself "by night and by day" (1Thess. 2:9; 2Thess. 3:8).
34. This does not mean that he worked around the clock at making a living, excluding ministry obligations, but that he did night labor and day labor to support himself.
35. So it is with the four living beings.
36. They do not cease from their assignment of offering praise to God.
37. This is their consuming practice whenever they are not otherwise engaged in carrying out other duties.
38. The praise of the four living beings focuses on three aspects of God's essence.
39. God's holiness is a combination of His absolute righteousness (+R) and justice.
40. These two attributes of His invisible essence form the "watchdog" of His other attributes.
41. The threefold ascription "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY" repeats Isa. 6:3.
42. The threefold ascription probably refers to the triune godhead.
43. God is inherently +R and J.
44. And so, He is set apart from His creation.
45. The 2nd aspect of God's essence comes to the fore in His title "LORD GOD THE ALMIGHTY."
46. This is a title by which the Father is known in Rev. 1:8.
47. It is a title applied to Him as a series of wrathful actions unfold against a negative and corrupt cosmos (cf. Rev. 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6, 15; 21:22).
48. The one seated upon the throne is omnipotent.
49. Omnipotence is the enforcer of His +R.
50. His omnipotence executes His overruling will against rebellious humanity, while at the same time delivering His people to a place of safety.
51. The living beings acknowledge Him as the sole possessor of this prerogative.
52. Thirdly, they sing about his eternality in the words: "WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."
53. This ascription of the attribute of eternal life was first seen in Rev. 1:4. (cf. 1:8; 11:17), but a shift of emphasis occurs here with the switch in position between "who was" and "who is."
54. Earlier uses of this title have emphasized His present existence by giving "who is" the first position but here giving "who was" the first position, giving His past existence more attention.
55. "WHO IS" refers to God's existence from eternity past to any point in time including the moment in prophetic future-look, that is the scene in heaven shortly after the Rapture.

56. “WHO IS” refers to any moment in time.
57. “WHO IS TO COME” is a prophetic statement related to future operations initiated by God the Father.
58. More specifically it refers to the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth and the fulfillment of the prayer petition “Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10).
59. E.L. is one of the attributes of divine essence that guarantees God’s ability to advance His plan from eternity past to eternity future.

Song of the Twenty-Four Elders (vv. 9-11)

VERSE 9 **And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever** *(*καὶ ὅταν δώσουσιν τὰ ζῷα δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων *[conj kai + conj hotan when + fut.act.ind.3p. didomi give + art.w/noun nom.nt.p. zoon living being + noun acc.f.s. doza glory + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. time honor, respect + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. eucharistia thanksgiving + art.w/pres.dep.part.dat.m.s. kathemai sit + prep epi + art.w/noun loc.m.s. thronos throne + art.w/pres.act.part.loc.m.s. zao live + prep eis to, unto + noun acc.m.p. aion age; idiom forever + conj kai + noun acc.m.p. aion forever])***,**

ANALYSIS: VERSE 9

1. The fourth activity around the throne is described in vv. 9-11.
2. Before recording the song of the 24 elders, John explains what occasions the singing.
3. The elders await the signal of the four living beings before proceeding with their tribute to the One seated upon the throne.
4. The praise of verse 8 is not continuous and unbroken as some interpreters imagine.
5. When interpreters take the praise of v.8 as continuous and unbroken, they cannot harmonize this with the inserted song of the elders.
6. Chapter 5 verse 8 indicates that the praise of the living beings is not strictly continuous.
7. Whenever appropriate and whenever permitted by freedom from other responsibilities the praise of the living beings is forthcoming.
8. The construction of the temporal clause in v.9 clarifies the periodic nature of the activities.
9. It is an indefinite temporal clause that conveys the idea of repetition: "whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks."
10. Every time one groups sings, so does the other.
11. It is interesting that the song of v.8 is considered in v.9 as giving "glory and honor and thanks."
12. The three words apply to the singing of v.8.
13. The first two words ("glory and honor") are not a problem.
14. They refer back to praise of God's perfections, namely, His holiness (+R and J), omnipotence, and eternality.
15. It is the third term "thanks" that at first glance seems out of place.
16. The term expressing gratitude is implicit in the praise of v.8.
17. Praise and thanks are intertwined.
18. The One sitting on the throne is further identified by the words "to the One who lives forever and ever."
19. The expression is used again in v.10 and in Rev.10:6, 15:7.
20. Its source is the LXX of Dan. 4:34 ("the one who lives forever") and Dan. 12:6 ("the one who lives forever") (cf. Dan. 6:26; Deut. 32:40).
21. Here the Greek expression adds ("and ever") to strengthen the idea.
22. This is another way of paying tribute to the divine attribute of E.L.
23. This expressions parallels in thought the last part of the four living beings song ("WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS COMING").

24. This same attribute is ascribed to Christ in Rev. 1:18.

Response of the Elders (v.10)

VERSE 10 **the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne** *(*πεσοῦνται οἱ εἴκοσι τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι ἐνώπιον τοῦ καθημένου ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου *[fut.dep.ind.3p. pipto fall + art.w/adj.nom.m.p. eikosi twenty + adj.nom.m.p. tessares four + noun (adjectival) nom.m.p. presbuteros elder + prep enopion before + art.w/pres.dep.part.gen.m.s. kathemai sit + prep epi + art.w/gen.m.s. thronos throne]***, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever** *[*καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων *[conj kai + fut.act.ind.3p. proskuneo worship + art.w/pres.act.part.dat.m.s. zao live + prep eis + art.w/noun acc.m.p. aion age; "forever" + conj kai + noun gen.m.p. aion literally "of the ages"]***, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying** *[*καὶ βαλοῦσιν τοὺς στεφάνους αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου λέγοντες *[conj kai + fut.act.ind. ballo cast + art.w/noun acc.m.p. stephanos crown + pro.gen.p. autos "their" + prep enopion before + art.w/noun gen.m.s. thronos throne + pres.act.part.nom.m.p. lego say])***,**

ANALYSIS: VERSE 10

1. The threefold response of the 24 elders is recorded by three future indicatives: "will fall down," "will worship," and "will cast."
2. This is the first of six times in the book when the elders prostrate themselves before God the Father's throne or the Lamb (cf. also 5:8,14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4).
3. Three times they are joined by the four living beings (cf. 5:8; 7:11; 19:4) and once by all the angels (7:11).
4. Here they alone fall before God who sits on the throne.
5. Their prone posture is for the sake of worshipping God on this august occasion.
6. The occasion is the appearance of the glorified body of Christ in the throne room just after the Rapture and Bema Seat events.
7. Their own glory, beauty, and excellence mean nothing to the 24 elders.
8. They give no indication of self-infatuation.
9. Rather, out of reverence and awe because of the deep spirit of humility they direct their silent adoration to the glorious eternal Father of lights in His very presence!
10. The first act is physical and the third act is mental/soulish.
11. Their third act, preparatory to breaking into song, is to cast their crowns before the throne.
12. The crowns of these esteemed pastor-teachers are the visible token of their Ph2 accomplishment (cf. 2Tim. 4:7-8 "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.").
13. The fact that they will cast their crowns before the author of the plan signifies their deep sense of the grace and mercy involved in this distinction and blessing.
14. The Greek term "crown" is literally "wreath."

15. It refers here and in the other citations in the NT epistles of the ultimate in eternal reward for a finished race run according to the rules of BD.
16. Jesus Christ Himself finished His course and is awarded this distinction (cf. Rev.14:14 cp. Heb.2:7,9 where the verbal cognate is used of Christ.).
17. It is also designated "the prize" (*brabeion*; cp. 1Cor.9:24).
18. The verb form is used in this connection in Col. 2:18 (pres.act.imper.3s. *katabrabeuo* "lit. of an judge deciding against, hence to disqualify; translation "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize…").
19. In 2Tim. 2:5 the verbal cognate to *stephanos* (pres.pass.ind.3s. *stephanoo* "place a wreath around"; cp. Heb.2:7,9).
20. 2Tim. 2:5 reads: "Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize (literally, "wreath") unless he competes according to the rules."
21. References to the wreath as the reward for Ph2 distinction: 1Cor.9:25; Phil.4:1; 1Thess.3:19; Phil.4:1; 2Tim.4:8; Jam.1:12; 1Pet.5:4; Rev.2:10; 3:11; Rev.4:4,10.

The Song (v.11)

VERSE 11 **" Worthy are You, our Lord and our God** *(*Ἄξιος εἶ, ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν *[adj.nom.m.s. axios strictly, balancing the scales; worthy + pres.act.ind.2s. eime "You are" + art.w/noun nom.m.s. theos God + art.w/noun nom.m.s. kurios lord + pro.gen.p. ego "our"]*, **to receive glory and honor and power** *[*λαβεῖν τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν *[aor.act.infin. lambano receive + art.w/noun acc.f.s. doza glory + conj kai + art.w/noun acc.f.s. time honor + art.w/noun acc.f.s. dunamis power]*; **for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created** *[*ὅτι σὺ ἔκτισας τὰ πάντα καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημά σου ἦσαν καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν *[conj hoti for; used to introduce a reason based on an evident fact + pro.nom.s. su + aor.act.ind.2s. ktizo create + art.w/adj.acc.nt.p. pas all + conj kai + prep dia + art.w/noun acc.nt.s. thelma will + pro.gen.s. su + impf.act.ind.3p. eimi "they existed" + conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3p. ktizo create, call into being])*."**

ANALYSIS: VERSE 11

1. The song of the 24 elders is more focused on the miracle of original creation (Gen.1:1) as evidence of His glory and power.
2. It opens with a declaration of God's worthiness.
3. Like the song of the four living beings in v.8, this song gives praise to God directly.
4. The adjective *axios* was used in the political language of the day on those occasions when the emperor marched in triumphal procession.
5. The elders' use of the first person plural pronoun ("our God") suggests that the elders represent redeemed humanity.
6. Christ Himself uses the first person pronoun in Rev. 3:12 in referring to God the Father ("My God").
7. Creation, not redemption is the subject of this song.

8. The doctrine of creation is a major subject in Revelation against a background of environmental upheaval and restoration.
9. The song is a tribute to God's worthiness "to receive glory and honor and power."
10. The first two terms of this tribute coincide with the first two of the song of the living beings (5:9), but the third term ("power"), replaces *eccharistain* ("thanks") of the first song of praise.
11. The reason for the change is the focus of the elders' song with its emphasis on God's power in original creation.
12. Doxologies throughout the book are composed of elements dictated by their respective contexts.
13. Based on the present setting God the Father is about to receive the credit due Him from lower creation (especially humanity) with respect to His creative works.
14. In this regard He receives "glory and honor and power" from His subjects as events unfold leading to the establishment of His kingdom on earth.
15. Men will willingly or grudgingly come to ascribe to Him the "glory and honor and power" that is His alone.
16. Certainly the redeemed of the Church age will render to Him His due.
17. The particular reason for the declaration of God's worthiness comes in the last half of the song: "because You created all things, and because of Your will they were and were created."
18. Such an acknowledgement of God's creative works recalls Pss. 33:6-9; 102:25; 136:5-9.
19. The phrase "because of Your will" focuses upon the operative cause of the creation.
20. God the Father's sovereignty expressed itself in creative activity which He alone had the wherewithal to bring to pass.
21. This song of the elders accumulates emphasis on God's creative work through a threefold statement that He did it.
22. The first statement directs attention to the action that brought all things into existence out of a state of nothingness.
23. The second statement addresses the fact that God gave "all things" existence by a specific act of His own sovereign power: "and by Your will they exist."
24. In addition, this statement containing the imperfect active indicative of "to be" verb *eimi* ("they exist") looks at the physical creation as having a continuum from the point of original creation forward.
25. The third and final statement "and were created" repeats the first statement of the simple fact of God's creative works and ties it to God's will.
26. Further this last statement indicates that the "all things" of creation are included in the action of the verb "to create" (*ktizo*).
27. Statements two and three expand upon statement one.
28. In other words, the simple act of creation is supported by the idea that God sustains what ("all things") He brought into existence (hence, "they exist"), and all he brought into existence He alone created in the first place.
29. In statements two and three we see a reverse chronological sequence of the two verbs "exist" and "created."
30. The order is logical rather than chronological.
31. With the song of the 24 elders this initial scene in the throne room closes.

32. Here we see the headquarters of the holy, omnipotent, and eternal God who requires His standards to by met by His creation.
33. Otherwise, His wrath must inflict punishments upon the works of His hands.

END: Revelation Chapter Four
Jack M. Ballinger
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