

Universal Tribute to the Lamb (vv. 11-12)

The Singers (v.11)

VERSE 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne

and the living creatures and the elders (Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν ἀγγέλων πολλῶν κύκλω τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν ζώων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.1s. eidon see; kai eidon at vv. 1,2,6,11 + conj kai + aor.act.ind.1s. akouo hear + acc.f.s. phone voice + noun gen.m.p. angelos angel + adj.gen.m.p. polus many + prep kuklo around, in a circle + art.w/gen.m.s. thronos throne + conj kai + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. zoon living being + conj kai + art.w/noun gen.m.p. presbuteros elder*]; **and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands** [καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς αὐτῶν μυριάδες μυριάδων καὶ χιλιάδες χιλιάδων [*conj kai + imperf.act.ind.3s. eimi + art.w/noun nom.m.s. arithmos number + pro.gen.p. autos “of them” + noun nom.f.p. murias countless thousands, ten thousand, myriad + noun gen.f.p. murias myriad + conj kai + noun nom.f.p. chalias a thousand; in combination with this same noun means millions + noun gen.f.p. chalias thousands of thousands*]),

The Doxology (v.12)

VERSE 12 saying with a loud voice (λέγοντες φωνῇ μεγάλῃ [*pres.act.part.nom.m.p. lego say + noun instr.f.s. phone voice + adj.instr.f.s. megas great*]), **" Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing [acclaim]** [Ἄξιόν ἐστιν τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἐσφαγμένον λαβεῖν τὴν δύναμιν καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ εὐλογίαν [*adj.nom.nt.s. azios worthy + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + art.w/noun nom.nt.s. arnion lamb + art.w/perf.pass.part.nom.nt.s. sphazo slay + aor.act.infin. lambano take + art.w/noun acc.f.s. dunamis power + conj kai + noun acc.m.s. ploutos wealth; “riches” + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. sophia wisdom + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. ischus might + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. time honor, respect + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. doxa glory + conj kai + noun acc.f.s. eulogia acclaim; “blessing”*])."

ANALYSIS: VERSES 11-12

1. Following the song of the 24 elders the scene shifts to tribute by the angelic hosts and the 24 elders.
2. A fourth occurrence of *kai eidon* (“and I looked”) signals another scene of this vision in the throne room in chapters four and five.
3. This one begins with a sweeping expression that includes all categories of elect angels along with the 24 representatives of the universal priesthood of the church triumphant.
4. John in his vision “heard” the sound they were making.

5. For the first time a more general company angels is designated by the expression “many angels.”
6. They join the heavenly chorus heretofore made up of only the four living beings and the twenty-four elders (cf. 4:8, 10-11; 5:8-9).
7. According to *kuklo tou thronou* (“around the throne”), they surround previously described throne on which the Father and the Lamb sit, with an inner circle of four living beings, and a larger circle of twenty-four elders.
8. The number of this combined company defies calculation: “the number of them was myriads upon myriads, and thousands upon thousands.”
9. Clearly the purpose of the expression *muriades muriadon kai chiliades chiliadon* is not to be numerically explicit, but to stipulate the extremely high number of heavenly beings joining this attribution of worthiness to the Lamb.
10. The expression is an echo of Daniel’s description of the attendants of the Ancient of Days in one of his prophetic visions (cf. Dan. 7:10).
11. The sequence that places the larger number (“myriads of myriads” or “ten thousands of ten thousands”), before the smaller one (“thousands of thousands”) is puzzling.
12. It is hypothesized that this is a mild *hysteron proteron*.
13. The word order is deliberate and the resultant anticlimax brings even more emphasis to the expression.
14. When ten thousand is multiplied by itself, even this does not touch the number of angels involved.
15. The leftover still comes to a figure amounting to a thousand multiplied by itself.
16. This is an apocalyptic symbol for countless ten of thousands of angels who lift their voice in this great doxology.
17. The song they sing follows in verse 12.
18. “Saying” is used in 4:8, 10 and 5:13 as well as here to introduce utterances of heavenly beings.
19. All four appear to be songs, though only one has an explicit indication (“they sang”) to prove it (and that one is attributed to the 24 elders).
20. Because of this, the other three could be classified as chants.
21. The angelic host accompanied by the twenty-four elders sing (or chant) with a loud voice (cf. the strong voice of speech of the angel in v.2).
22. Angels are far from disinterested spectators in the unfolding drama of redemption (cf. Eph. 3:10; 1Pet.1:12).
23. They recognize the splendor of Christ’s sacrificial act and its infinite merit by joining in doxology with the representatives of the Royal Family.
24. The doxology is phrased in the third person rather than the second person (cf. 4:11; 5:9): “worthy is”.
25. It is thus addressed to all those who sustain a relationship to the Lamb that may register agreement with the thrust of the doxology.
26. The analogy of other doxologies shows the meaning not to be that God has given Christ the seven capacities and powers in the following list, but is rather that Christ is worthy to receive adoration for the things He already possesses.
27. The slain Lamb is not only worthy to take the seven-sealed scroll and open its seals (cf. 5:4-5,7), but according to this heavenly tribute is worthy to inherit the blessings connected with this sevenfold complex.

28. The opening of the seals paves the way to the full SG3 of the Lamb.
29. The repetition of *kai* between each item of the series lends a kind of solemn dignity to each word even though the group is viewed as a single complex expression.
30. “Power” heads the list and points to the sense of omnipotence.
31. It denotes inherent ability.
32. This word occurs along with three others in this series, *plouton*, *ischun*, and *doza*, in the similar doxology of 1 Chron.29:11-12 [LXX], the earliest known heptad of such titles of honor.
33. “Riches” includes not just spiritual wealth, but also physical wealth as well.
34. The One who endured humiliation and deprivation, even though He was the eternal Son of God, inherits incalculable riches which He in turn bestows on His people.
35. His “wisdom” demonstrates itself in the purposeful creation and rule of the world, appointing limits and goals in the execution of God’s plan.
36. It establishes the rule of righteousness on earth and is the moral power pervading and effecting the consummation of human history.
37. To believers Christ is the wisdom of God (cf. 1Cor.1:24, 30).
38. The nuance of the Greek noun translated “strength” (*ischun*) refers to reserve strength (versus inherent strength as in the case of *dunamis* or active strength as in the case of *kratos*).
39. “Honor” refers to the honor that is due Him based on His supreme sacrifice (Heb. 2:9; cf. Phil. 2:11).
40. When associated with “glory”, “honor” denotes a position of honor that is only one part of “glory.”
41. “Glory” is term connoting divine and heavenly radiance, the loftiness and majesty of God and even the being of God, the mode of His being.
42. In regard to Christ, “glory” is elsewhere associated with Him in His incarnation (Jn.1:14; Heb.2:9).
43. “Blessing” is the acclaim (or praise) that is His based on His earthly achievement.
44. His intrinsic praiseworthiness is made clearer in the similar doxology of 1 Chron.29:11-13.
45. That quality of evoking man’s grateful response for benefits received is “thanks” (cf. 4:9).
46. It is what makes Him worthy of the ascription of praise.
47. It creates in the creature willingness, unaccompanied by coercion, to return blessing for blessing conferred.
48. Again, here the final term denotes acknowledgement of who and what He is.
49. The series of seven is governed by a single definite article (*ten*).
50. This demonstrates that all seven qualities as belonging intrinsically to Christ, rather than assigning some of them to a human response to His person.
51. Even the last item is an acknowledgement of what He possesses in Himself, as distinguishable from what the creature returns in appreciation.
52. The objective here is to contrast what is Christ’s eternal heritage over against the designation “the Lamb that was slain” which is expressive of weakness.
53. Note that the power terms are put first in this list (“power and riches and wisdom and strength”) in contrast to the more usual sequence in doxologies which ascribe to God “honor,” “glory,” and “blessing” at the outset with the power terms coming last.
54. This order is sensitive to the contrast between the Lion and the Lamb, between power and weakness.

55. The power terms are put first here to emphasize the power of the Lamb.

Universal Acclaim (v.13)

VERSE 13 **And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and**

under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying (καὶ πᾶν κτίσμα ὃ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς πάντα ἤκουσα λέγοντας [*conj kai + adj.acc.nt.s. pas every + noun acc.nt.s. ktisma creature; 4x: 1Tim. 4:4; Jam.1:18; Rev.5:13; 8:9 + rel.pro.nom.nt.s. ho which + prep en + art.w/noun loc.m.s. ouranos heaven + conj kai + prep epi upon + art.w/noun gen.f.s. ge earth + conj kai + prep hupokato underneath + art.w/noun gen.f.s. ge earth + conj kai + prep epi upon + art.w/noun art.w/noun gen.f.s. thalassa sea + conj kai + def.art.acc.nt.p. to “things” + prep en + pro.loc.nt.p. auto “them” + adj.acc.nt.p. pas all+ aor.act.ind.1s. akouo hear + pres.act.part.acc.m.p. lego say*], **" To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever** [τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ ἡ εὐλογία καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων [*art.w/pres.dep.part.dat.m.s. kathemai sit + prep epi upon + art.w/noun dat.m.s. thronos throne + conj kai + art.w/noun dat.nt.s. arnion lamb + art.w/noun nom.f.s. strictly good speech; hence praise, acclaim; “blessing” + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. time honor + conj + art.w/noun f.s. doxa glory + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.nt.s. kratos power; “dominion” + prep eis into; until + art.w/noun acc.m.p. aion age + art.w/noun gen.m.p. aion age; literally: “until the ages of the ages” = “forever and ever”*])."

ANALYSIS: VERSE 13

1. With the conclusion of the doxology of v.12, the company of celebrants now broadens to incorporate the whole creation.
2. This song of acclaim climaxes the description of the throne room scene in chapters 4 and 5.
3. Revelation 4 focused upon the one sitting on the throne, and Rev.5:1-12 on the Lamb.
4. The worship offered to both is united in one great closing doxology acclaimed by all created things.
5. The threefold division of creation in 5:3 is now a fourfold through the addition of “and on the sea, and all things in them.”
6. The acclaim is not longer just representative; it is exhaustive, not one creature being omitted.
7. The noun *ktisma* (“creature”) in the NT is invariably a concrete term referring either to “a creature” or “a created thing.”
8. In the present verse it clearly refers to intelligent animated creation.
9. The chorus includes all who are in heaven, both specified and non-specified in these two chapters.

10. This includes all angelic beings who are in audience at this juncture, as well as the glorified body of Christ, the church, along with OT saints and any tribulational saints that may have died at the early stage.
11. Based on the language of universality we somehow must factor in those not present as well as those not yet born as well as those who are hopelessly negative.
12. The negative ones include all fallen angels as well as all unbelievers.
13. Those who do not participate in this acclaim must someday join in the chorus to satisfy the spirit of this verse and its signature of universality.
14. We know that eventually all intelligent creatures will come to extol the preeminent qualities of God the Lamb (cf. Phil. 2:9-11).
15. The entirety of intelligent life joins in, even fallen angels imprisoned “under the earth” (cf. 2Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
16. This song and its theme of universality is anticipatory, even beyond the time-frame of these events, of the great future day at the end of human history when no one will withhold from God His due.
17. The mention of the sea, both of the things “on” (*epi*) its surface as well as “all things in them” point to aquatic life.
18. The praise of the lower creation or the animal world is fulfilled by the fact that these creatures glorify God in the only way possible-their habits and nature thus fulfilling in part Ps. 150:6: “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.”
19. The climatic song is brief but forceful.
20. The conjunction of God the Father and the Lamb as joint-objects of this doxology here and in Rev. 7:10 reflects the sound theological perspective of this book regarding the Person of Christ.
21. The throne of both is one and the same, and worship offered to one is worship offered to the other.
22. The doxology has four elements, three of them being identical with the previous three of the doxology of v.12, though different in sequence.
23. The fourth member is *kratos* (“dominion”), which is found in a doxology elsewhere only at Rev. 1:6.
24. This term denotes active power in contrast to reserve strength expressed by *ischun* in the doxology of v.12 which it replaces.
25. This is an appropriate term in light of the impending kingdom rule about to be set in motion.
26. Four articles, three occurrences of *he* (“the”) and one of *to* (“the”) individualize the four members of this doxology, in contrast to the grouping of the seven in the previous doxology under the governance of a single article.
27. This causes each term to stand out by itself, as the same construction does in 4:11.
28. The use of *kai* (“and”) between each term serves further to pile up the ascription like a tower of praise.
29. Endless acclaim/blessing and honor and glory and dominion/strength belong to the one sitting on the throne and the Lamb.
30. Their exaltation is not temporary.
31. It endures forever as the concluding *eis tous aionas ton aionon* emphatically asserts.
32. With complete unanimity, the entire universe *joins* in the deserved acclamation.
33. In the end all will concur with the doctrine we who are positive hold to be true.

Response of the Beings and Elders (v.14)

VERSE 14 **And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen"** (καὶ τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα ἔλεγον, Ἄμήν [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.p. tessares four + noun nom.nt.p. zoon living being + imperf.act.ind.3p. lego say + part oof affirmation at the end of a prayer, a doxology or a solemn declaration of what is true; also used as a title for Christ in Rev. 3:14*])."

And the elders fell down and worshiped (καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσαν καὶ προσεκύνησαν [*conj kai + art.w/noun nom.m.p. presbuteros + aor.act.ind.3p. pipto fall + conj kai + aor.act.ind.3p. proskuneo bow down, worship*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 14

1. The four living beings close the doxology with an "Amen" of confirmation.
2. They repeat this confirmation over and over and over as indicated by the imperfect tense of the verb "to say."
3. The translation of the NAS captures this in the words "kept saying."
4. These four cherubim of the throne pronounced the first doxology of 4:8 and conclude the final one.
5. Possibly the imperfect tense points to their saying "Amen" after each attribute of the doxology.
6. This would certainly add drama to the scene but it is only conjecture.
7. Probably after the vast chorus became silent, the four cherubim voiced their total agreement with what the rest had just spoken.
8. The very last item on the agenda of introduction to the opening of the seals is the silent worship of the 24 elders.
9. This is a fresh act of homage by them.
10. As they fell before the one sitting upon the throne in 4:10, so now they prostrate themselves in worship before Him and the Lamb.
11. Symbolically they too acknowledge the reality behind the universal doxology of praise offered by the all intelligent creatures.

END: Revelation Chapter Five

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