

- *The Book of Revelation gives us a true and full view of life*
- *God rules and reigns from heaven*

Heaven is a place of peace and purity

- *Sea calmed*

Heaven worships God for his creation

- *Four living beings*
- *God's angelic servants – great speed and knowledge*

- *Ceaseless singing*

- *Worship of God*

The book of Revelation gives us a true and full view of life. What is life all about? What are we here for? Why are we in this world? What is our purpose? How are we to spend our time? It is the book of Revelation that tells us that life is ruled by God. God is enthroned as King of the universe. He is putting down evil and setting up his kingdom. He rules and reigns from heaven.

Heaven is a place of peace and purity. We read: ⁶*And before the throne was something like a sea of glass, resembling crystal.* The vision uses the picture of the laver in the tabernacle. In the courtyard between the tabernacle and the large altar, the priests of the tabernacle had to wash their hands and feet before entering the tabernacle^{□1}. There can be no fellowship with God unless sins are washed away.

The large laver also spoke of the sea, which in Israel was used as a picture of restlessness and sinfulness^{□1}. In the presence of God, the sea has been calmed! The endless restlessness caused by wickedness has been pacified and brought to an end.

Heaven worships God for his creation. We read: *And near to the throne and around the throne were four living beings full of eyes in front and behind.* The 'living beings' are angels taking different form. ⁷*The first living being was like a lion. The second living being was like an ox. The third living being had the face like that of a human being. The fourth living being was like a flying eagle.* The 'living beings' represent God's creation. The lion is the king of the wild animals. The ox is famous among the domestic animals. The man represents humankind. The eagle represents the creatures of the sky. Only four are chosen because the number four speaks of the earth. The angelic-creatures are God's agents, God's servants. ⁸*Each of the four living beings has six wings and is full of eyes all around and inside.* Because they are God's servants in control of God's world, they have wings – speaking of the speed at which they move. They have eyes – speaking of their great knowledge.

The living beings, who represent God's control over creation, worship God.

Day and night without ceasing they sing,

*'Holy, holy, holy,
the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come.'*

⁹*And whenever the living beings give glory and honour and thanks to the One who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before the one who is seated on the throne and they worship the one who lives for ever. They throw their crowns before the throne, singing,*

¹¹*'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.'*

All the inhabitants of heaven are seen worshipping God. They specially

□1 see Exodus 30:17-21

□1 see Isaiah 57:20-21

as creator

• Creation comes before redemption

• Creation worships first, then God's people join in

• God's first gift – the gift of existence

• God's creation has a purpose

• Worship – words, music and movement – living the heavenly life

focus in their worship on God's work as the creator. In Revelation 5:9 we shall find them worshipping as they consider God's work as Redeemer. But creation comes before redemption. The world had to exist before it could fall and need redemption. Salvation is God's restoring his creation. Creation came first and God's work as the Saviour is his determination not to abandon his creation.

In John's vision the living beings are the ones who commence the praise of God. They praise God first. Then, whenever they do so, the elders join in the worship. It means that creation glorifies God first. 'The heavens are telling the glory of God; the firmament proclaims his handiwork'¹. The people of God (represented by the elders) join in the worship that creation itself is already giving to God. Creation tells us of the sovereignty of God's will. 'By your will they existed and were created'².

The first gift God ever gives us is the gift of existence. Before he saved us, he made us. We could never have been saved if we had not existed! He gives us our life and he gives us the world in which we live. In Genesis 1, the human race is the climax of creation. Everything is shaped and ordered so as to prepare the way for men and women. Humankind is created on the last 'day' of creation; it means that they had no part in creating what came into being on the previous days. They had no share in God's creation.

God's creation has a purpose. We do not fully know all that is involved. God has 'wisdom, secret and hidden . . . decreed before the ages'¹. 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived'² is prepared for God's people. When God's creation fell, God took action to redeem his world and restore his creation. Creation was there first, but it has not been abandoned. Jesus' dying upon the cross was God's way of restoring his creation. The people present had no idea what was happening. 'None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory'³.

The inhabitants of heaven worship God. They enjoy God; they trust God, and tell him what they feel towards him. They use words and music and movement. When we worship God we are living the heavenly life already. God has created us! God has made our world! We tell God how we feel about this. This is what they do in heaven. This is what we do on earth!

¹ Psalm 19:1

² 4:11

¹ 1
Corinthians 2:7
² 1
Corinthians 2:9

³ 1
Corinthians 2:8



Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His *Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)* books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.



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