

• *Heaven is a place of worship*

Heaven is a place of worship. But what do we mean when we talk about worship? Sometimes it is said, 'The whole of life is worship', and this is right. For others worship is the kind of life style we live, and that is right also. Yet there is 'worship' in the more narrow and strict sense. In the narrower sense of the term worship is enjoying God, trusting him and telling him how you feel in words, music and movement. In this sense (as well as in others) heaven is a place of worship.

The residents of heaven tell God how they admire him

The residents of heaven tell God how they admire him. ⁸*And when he had taken the book, the four living beings and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.* The Lamb is able to be the ruler of history. This leads the representatives of creation (the living beings) and the representatives of the entire people of God (the elders) to worship the Lamb. They make music with their harps. They are praying; the incense represents prayer.

• *Incense represents prayer*

They are enjoying God

They are enjoying God. The Lamb's death led to triumph, and the residents of heaven are admiring the Lord Jesus Christ because of his mighty victory.

⁹*And they sing a new song,*

'You are worthy to take the book, and to open its seals, because you were killed,

and with your blood you purchased men and women for God, from every tribe and language and people and nation.'

• *The death of the Lord Jesus Christ has led to an international people coming into being*

They know that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ has led to an international people coming into being. In the church of Jesus Christ, internationalism is more important than nationalism. Pagans bring divisions among the nations; the gospel of Jesus brings unity among the nations, and that unity is seen supremely in heaven. The people who have been redeemed come from an immense variety of national and tribal backgrounds but they find their unity in the worship of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

• *The gospel of Jesus brings unity among the nations*

• *Worship is important because Jesus is worthy*

Why is worship so important? One reason is: **because Jesus is worthy.** We should honour people for what they do. We give admiration and recognition to those who deserve it. Jesus deserves our recognition and praise more than anyone ever in the history of the universe. He is worthy not only because of who he is – the divine Son of God – but because of what he did as a human being.

The worshippers admire what Christ has done for his people.

¹⁰*'You made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign upon earth.'*

The worship of heaven is corporate, loud, enthusiastic, repetitive

The worship of heaven is corporate, loud, enthusiastic, repetitive. ¹¹*Then I looked, and I heard a voice of many angels around about the throne and the living beings and the elders. The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,* ¹²*singing with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that has been killed to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and*

been killed to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing.’ It is crowded, noisy worship. The worshippers heap up words. No doubt someone could have produced a brief summary, but no one was interested in ‘summarized’ worship.

• Music and movement

The worship included music and movement. The worshippers are not cold and static. They fall down to the ground in their worship. ¹³ *And I heard every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all the things that are in them, singing, ‘To him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever.’* ¹⁴ *And the four living beings said, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshipped.* The Lamb and God the Father equally receive this worship. Both share the throne. The Lord Jesus Christ, the One who is God-and-man, has been exalted to share the Father’s throne and to receive worship equally with the Father.

• We are to start living the heavenly life straight away!

Worship is not only an important part in the activities of heaven. We are to start living the heavenly life straight away! For we are risen and ascended in Christ already. We shall find that when we worship the Father and the Son in this way we are getting our hearts right to live the kind of life that we ought to live. God wants our worship, but it is for our sake more than for his sake. He wants us to see things as they really are. When we see God sitting on the throne, when we see our Lord Jesus Christ as the glorified High Priest who rules over the church, we are simply seeing things for what they are. We are getting hold of reality.

• When we see God on the throne and Jesus Christ glorified, we are getting hold of reality

• Confidence in distress and peace amidst trouble

It will do a lot for us if we can see by faith the way in which heaven worships God – and then join in the heavenly worship with them. It will give us confidence in distress, peace amidst trouble. It will give us power over sin, strength against temptation.

• Power over sin and strength against temptation

We have seen that heaven worships God as Creator. But the residents of heaven seem to get even more enthusiastic when they worship the Father and the Son for the work of redemption. God has redeemed us, delivered us from bondage by paying the price of the blood of his Son. God has enthroned us with the Lord Jesus Christ. God has made us priests with access to him. The elders fell down and worshipped. So should we.

• We should worship our creator and redeemer



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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