

Revelation 5:11-14

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Every living creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth joins in singing praises to the Lamb that was slain, celebrating that He is able to open the scroll and read the contents that will restore all things.

In the previous section, the *living creatures and the elders* had fallen down to worship the Lamb (Revelation 5:8). They had begun to sing a “new song” speaking of the worthiness of the Lamb to receive all honor and all blessings and to reign over the earth (Revelation 5:9-10). The “new song” also speaks of the wonder that Jesus will include peoples from every nation to reign with Him, to be a “kingdom” and to be “priests” along with the great King of Kings and the Great High Priest (Hebrews 8:1).

Now John *looked*. He says *I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders* in their song (v 11). John continues, *and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands* of voices (v 11).

That there are *myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands* could mean a number of things. It could be that the *myriads of myriads* refer to all or any combination of all angels, all creatures, all creation and all peoples, since this saying is spoken by *every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them* (v 13). This could even include those who are not redeemed, as:

“Every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
(Philippians 2:10)

That there are *thousands of thousands* noted separately from the *myriads of myriads* could simply be emphasizing the vast number. But the Greek word translated *myriads* indicates an innumerable company, while *thousands* is more discrete. *Thousands of thousands* would be many millions, while *myriads of myriads* would be innumerable.

The *thousands of thousands* could refer to the overcomers, those who chose the narrow way. As Jesus said in Matthew 22:14, many are called but few are chosen, indicating that it will be a small subset of believers who choose to walk as faithful witnesses and gain the fullest of rewards (as promised in Revelation 1:3). A primary emphasis of Revelation is to motivate believers to be numbered as an overcomer, and receive the incredible reward of reigning with Christ, entering the joy of our Master (Matthew 25:21; Revelation 3:21).

And this vast assembly of *myriads of myriads* and *thousands of thousands* said *with a loud voice*:

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (v 12).

The new song in verses 9-10 was sung to the Lamb that “You were slain,” but now the *Lamb* is directly named as *the Lamb that was slain* (v 12). And He is proclaimed as *worthy*, not only to break the seals and open the book, but *to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing*. That is the culmination of the end of this age.

Part of restoring all things is reinstating authority to its proper place. God originally designed humans to reign over the earth (Hebrews 2:5-8). Humans fell and did not properly reign over the earth (Hebrews 2:8). But Jesus restored the right of humans to have the “glory and honor” to reign through Jesus’s “suffering of death”—that is through Him being the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for the sins of the world (Hebrews 2:9).

Because of the “suffering of death” and His obedience, Jesus was *worthy* to restore the right of humanity to reign in the earth. Jesus is *worthy* because he was *the Lamb that was slain*. Because of His obedience even to death on a cross, His name was lifted above every name (Philippians 2:8-10).

Jesus’s reward for being *worthy* is to *receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing*. He was granted this after He arose (Matthew 28:18). He has waited until this time to *receive*. Because He is *worthy*, He will now open the scroll and usher in the end of the age, and take possession of the throne of the earth. He will dwell upon the earth among humanity, with His glory fully unveiled (Revelation 21:22).

That which was previously granted to Him will now be possessed. Incredibly, Jesus intends to share that reward with those that are His (Revelation 5:10). He will share His authority with those who have overcome as He overcame (Revelation 3:21). The praise of the *Lamb that was slain* is joined by all of creation:

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, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever” (v 13).

As if the *thousands of thousands* of voices were not enough (v 11), *every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them* began to speak as well (v 13). Psalm 19 says the creation already declares praises to God:

“The heavens are telling of the glory of God;
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.
Day to day pours forth speech,
And night to night reveals knowledge.”
(Psalm 19:1)

The Apostle Paul quotes from Psalm 19 to make the point that the gospel is declared to all peoples, because all can see God’s creation (Romans 10:18). Here in verse 13 the praise of *every created thing* becomes audible. Jesus, the Lamb, is worthy to receive possession of and authority over all that is. Now this throng consisting of *every created thing* offers their praise and consent to the authority of Jesus to have *dominion forever and ever*.

Thus Jesus, the Son of David, will ascend to the throne of David *forever and ever*. But He will also ascend to the throne of the entire earth. Jesus restored *dominion* to humanity through the suffering of death (Hebrews 2:8-9). Jesus had to become human in order to accomplish this, and because He was willing to become human, and learned obedience, every knee will bow to Him (Philippians 2:8-11).

Earlier in this chapter, it was said that “And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it” (Revelation 5:3). They looked throughout creation and found no one to open the scroll. But now Jesus, the Lamb, has been found worthy. So now *every created thing* and everyone *on the sea, and all the things in them* are celebrating that Jesus is worthy to open the scroll; now creation will be fully redeemed (v 13).

In Philippians, Paul says that because Jesus took the form of a human and was obedient to die on the cross, God exalted Him “so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11).

We now see the fulfillment of this exaltation, that *every created thing which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them* are praising God and proclaiming His glory, saying:

To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever (v 13).

The Lamb is the one *who sits on the throne*, which means He is over all creation. This was the case for Jesus prior to Him coming to earth, as Philippians says that prior to coming to earth as a human, Jesus “existed in the form of God” (Philippians 2:6). That means He was already on the throne of heaven as God. But now He is on the throne of heaven as the *Lamb* of God. In order to become the Lamb, He had to become human, and die to take away the sins of the world.

Because of His willingness to leave heaven, become the Lamb, bear the sins of the world, and pave the way for the restoration of all creation, He deserves *blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever* (v 13). The *glory and dominion* He gained was to reign as both God and human, for Jesus is fully God and fully human. Jesus restored the right of humans to reign and have dominion over the earth, as they were created to have (Hebrews 2:8-10).

Jesus is fully God, but He also gained the reward of being the “Son” and gained dominion over the earth as a human (Hebrews 1:5, 8,13). He died for the sins of the world, so that full restoration of relationship with God is gained by all who believe (John 3:14-16). God is the inheritance for all who believe (Romans 8:17a). Jesus also desires that all His children receive the reward of being a “son” and gain the great blessing promised in Revelation 1:3 for being a faithful witness, as He was faithful (Romans 8:17b).

Jesus desires to share His reign with all who overcome as He overcame (Revelation 3:21). Jesus overcame rejection, loss, and death from the world. But notwithstanding the great rewards He will give, *every created thing*, as well as the *elders* who have been given crowns and thrones, all prostrate themselves and worship the Lamb:

As every created thing is praising the Lamb, then the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped (v 14).

The word *Amen* can mean "may it be." This might indicate a unanimous affirmation that all creation longs to be redeemed, and is anxious to see the Lamb open the scroll and begin the process of restoring creation; justice will reign, and there will be a new heaven and earth (Romans 8:22).

Biblical Text

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 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, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." ¹⁴ And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.