

The Four Living Creatures

The four living creatures John describes in Revelation 4:6-9 are the worship leaders of heaven! They seem to belong to a higher order of angels and are in the forefront of the angelic host constantly praising God and serving His creation. With their many “eyes” they are fully alert to all that happens both in heaven and on earth. They serve God and mankind with courage and strength (lion), they have patience and strength enabling them to render service (ox), they are intelligent and wise (human face), and they possess swiftness and accuracy as they eagerly obey God (eagle). The creatures constantly praise God as their Creator, especially for those attributes meaningful to God’s people in times of persecution, such as the first readers of John’s Revelation. God is holy—utterly separate from all created beings. He is almighty—able to protect and save His people. He is eternal—alone He is the source and basis of all that endures forever.

The Twenty-Four Elders

The twenty-four elders represent God’s people in every era of human history (twelve tribes of Israel from the Old Testament and twelve apostles from the New Testament). The white garments reflect Christ’s righteousness that clothes His people. The thrones and gold crowns symbolize royal authority as God’s people reign with Christ now hidden...not yet fully revealed until His return.

The Scroll

The scroll records God’s redemptive plan of salvation from Christ’s ascension back to the Father until His coming again to judge the living and the dead and usher in the new creation. Only the Lamb (Jesus) who was slain can open the scroll and He alone controls what is written to advance His everlasting Kingdom!

The Hymn of Praise

The great Hymn of Praise is sung by the four living creatures, twenty-four Elders, millions of angels, and all of creation to God the Father who sits upon the throne and Jesus the Lamb who ascends back to heaven for His enthronement:

Refrain (Rev 4:8): *“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”*

Verse 1 (Rev 4:11): *“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”*

Verse 2 (Rev 5:9-10): *“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,
¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”*

Verse 3 (Rev 5:12): *“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”*

Verse 4 (Rev 5:13): *“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and Might forever and ever!”*

Closing (Rev 5:14): Even as the four living creatures, who are the worship leaders of heaven, began this great hymn of praise, so they also bring it to a conclusion with *“Amen!”*

The Church on earth joins in this Hymn of Praise in worship along *“with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven!”*