

Throne of God

Reading: Revelation 11:17 - 19

2-16-2020

Introduction: Our view of God – small – puny or majestic?

First, let's review Old Testament Throne Scenes

I. Old Testament Throne Scenes

A. God on Mt. Sinai - ten times seen His glory (Numbers 14:22)

1. Exodus 19:1 – 6, 8 A kingdom of priests agree to the covenant
2. Exodus 19:10 – 17 - a washed people come out to meet God
3. Exodus 19:18 – 20 Note smoke – fire – thunder – earthquake
4. Exodus 19:21 – 22 “No person can see God and live.” (Ex. 33:20)
5. Choose life – Deut. 30:19 – 20a

B. Isa. 6:1 – 8 (740 – 739 BC)

1. Saw the Lord sitting on a throne in a temple
2. Seraphim communicate God's holiness
3. There is trembling at His voice (Isa. 66:2b)
4. Temple filling with smoke – the glory of the Lord.
5. Isaiah in relation to God (vs. 5)
6. Purification is necessary prior to coming into God's presence.
7. Now Isaiah can volunteer for service: “Here am I. Send me.”

C. Ezekiel 1:1 – 5 (Visions of God)

1. Ezekiel saw– storm cloud – fire flashing – bright light – glowing metal
2. **Throne scene – Ezek. 1:26 – 28** – appearance of a man – Radiance around him - rainbow – glory of the Lord.
3. Fell on my face before the throne -glory of the Lord.

D. Daniel 7:9 – 10 “Ancient of Days” (God on His throne)

1. **Daniel 7:13 – 14 Son of Man** – given glory and a kingdom.
2. **A kingdom which will never be destroyed.**

II. Worship in God's Presence

A. Symbolism in Revelation

B. “One sitting on the throne” (4:1-7)

C. “The four living creatures” (4:8; cf. Ezekiel 1)

1. These creatures are glorious in their own right, yet they are consumed with worship of God.
2. Like the seraphim in Isaiah (Is. 6:1-4), the living creatures cry out in adoration of God's nature:
 - His holiness (“Holy, holy, holy”)
 - His great power (“the Almighty”)
 - His eternal nature (“who was and who is and who is to come”)

D. “The twenty four elders” (4:9-11)

1. In humility and great thanksgiving they "cast their crowns before the throne."
2. This crown (*stephanos*) was the victor's wreath awarded to champion athletes.
3. God is worthy. He is worthy because He is the Creator.

E. “The Lamb” (5:1-7)

1. In 5:1-7 the scene shifts somewhat and we are introduced to “the Lamb” who "has overcome" and who alone is worthy to open the scroll.

F. “The four living creatures and the twenty four elders” (5:8-10)

1. The living creatures and elders “fell down before the Lamb” and “sang a new song” (5:8)
2. The song is new because the victory is new; with every new layer of revelation comes new praise.
3. Their new song of praise describes the victory of Jesus at the cross – the redemption, the sanctification and the victory he gained for God and for us.

G. “Many angels” (5:11-12)

H. “Every created thing” (5:13)

1. Now every created thing everywhere praises “him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb”
2. They add:

I. “The four living creatures... And the elders” (5:14)

J. “The souls of those who had been slain” (6:9-11)

1. The Lamb began opening the seals, unleashing God's purposes and subsequent judgments.
2. When the fifth seal is opened we see God's people crying out to him.
3. Here worship is not exclusively in the form of praise, but in prayer and petition.

K. Praise in the Midst of Judgment (7:9-12)

1. As the text continues, God's judgment continues.
2. Their proclamation is simply, “Salvation!”
3. While the world opposing God is swept away in judgment, those who are His revel in his salvation.

L. “The angels and the elders and the four living creatures” (7:11-12)

1. They “fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God” (7:11).
2. They proclaimed:

M. “The mystery of God is finished” (11:15-19)

1. Here the first overall sequence of judgment comes to an end.
2. The enemies of God have been put down and heaven again erupts in worship.

N. “Loud voices in heaven” (11:15)

O. “The twenty four elders” (11:16)

1. The victorious elders “fell on their faces and worshiped God” (11:16)
2. They give thanks and praise:

“We give you thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and to reward your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”
(11:17-18)