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**Series:** At the feet of Jesus...

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### **there is awe**

I know we have a hard time with the book of Revelation. It's a challenging book. But it is also an exciting book. Why? Because it gives us a taste, a glimpse, of what is to come. It gives us a picture of what heaven will be like for those who believe and follow Jesus.

We can try to imagine heaven, but we can't really fathom it. It's like stick figures. I have four children. My two oldest are Shekynah and Corban, ages 7 and 6. Shekynah was born on December 25. (Can you imagine my wife giving birth on Christmas day?) Corban was due the next December 25, but was born on the 29<sup>th</sup>. (So we have plenty of gifts at Christmastime!) They love to draw pictures. A lot of their pictures are cute, but I also notice that many of the pictures they have drawn are "stick figures" with lines and circles. Of course, these pictures do not show everything. There may not be much detail showing what a person looks like. But they give me a glimpse of what my children are trying to show me, even though I don't see the full picture. The same is true with the book of Revelation. It gives us a "stick figure" glimpse of heaven. When we get there, we will see so much more!

While we don't know what all we will see and experience in heaven, one thing I do know for sure is that when we get to heaven, we will fall at the feet of Jesus. We will be blown away in awe. There are six different occasions when different beings "fell on their knees" throughout the book of Revelation. I'd like for us to take a journey through Revelation and visit these occasions. Are you ready?

First, Revelation 1:17, 18 says, *"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.'"*

Who wrote these verses? It was a man named John who wrote the book of Revelation. He saw Jesus, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at His feet. This is a sign of great respect and awe. John knew, as Jesus declared, that Jesus had died, but then was raised from the dead. Jesus is alive forever and ever! That is why John fell at his feet out of respect and awe for what Jesus had done. At the feet of Jesus, John had reverence (honor) for who Jesus is and what Jesus had done for him.

Revelation 4:10, 11 says, *"The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and*

*say: 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.' "*

"Twenty-four elders" is representative of either the whole company of believers in heaven or an exalted angelic order worshipping and serving God there. The number 24 is an interesting number. It is kind of unusual. Most often, we see the numbers 3, 7 and 12 in the Bible. The number 24 is often understood to reflect the 12 Israelite tribes of the Old Testament and the 12 apostles of the New Testament.

What did they all do? They all fell down before Jesus, who sits on the throne, and they worshipped Him. They laid their crowns before the throne. This was an acknowledgment and proclamation that God alone is worthy of ultimate praise and worship.

Let's continue our journey by going to Revelation 5:8a, which says, *"And when he had taken it (the scroll), the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb."*

Now, we have the four living creatures, in addition to the twenty-four elders. In my research, I discovered that the four living creatures are an exalted order of angelic beings whose task is to guard the heavenly throne and to lead in worship and adoration of God.

I want to emphasize the word "Lamb." It's an important word in this verse. "Lamb" refers to Jesus as the "sacrificial one." In the Old Testament, lambs were sacrificed to atone for the sins of people. Through this, God would forgive the sins of His people. In the New Testament, Jesus came to be our "Lamb." He was the Lamb who took away our sins. John the Baptist declared in John 1:29, *"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"* So Jesus is truly the Lamb of God!

The creatures and elders fell down in reverence for Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, for being our Lamb. Isn't that awesome? We need to be thankful for what Jesus has done for us and for His sacrifice.

Revelation 7:11 says, *"All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God."* That shows much reverence to God.

We've had twenty-four elders and four living creatures. Now, we have a multitude of angels. They all fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God. In verse 12, they worshipped God by proclaiming SEVEN words of praise to Him. The seven words are praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power and strength.

Now, here are the last two verses regarding someone or some being that falls at the feet of Jesus. Revelation 19:10 says, *"At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!'"* Revelation 22:8, 9 says, *"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who*

*had been showing them to me. But he said to me, 'Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!'* ”

The verses in Revelation 19 and 22 seem rather strange. Why would John fall down at the feet of the angel and worship the angel? I believe John was overwhelmed at what had been revealed to him by the angel. He was blown away in awe. It was a natural reaction for John to bow down and worship the angel. But the angel told John to worship God.

Really, the angel was right. Only God should be revered and worshipped. Personally, I am an ordained minister. Some people have called me “reverend.” Quite honestly, I am not comfortable being called “reverend.” I believe only God should be revered, not me. Only God should be revered, as the angel said.

Once again, we’ve only gotten a taste of heaven. What John wrote in Revelation is only a glimpse. What John saw was only a taste of heaven. But that was enough to convict him to fall down and worship the angel! Again, we’ve only gotten a glimpse of heaven. But that should be enough to lead us to fall down at the feet of Jesus and worship Him. Now, imagine when we get to heaven and see it all! What an experience that will be! We will be blown away in awe! We’ll be overwhelmed more than we can imagine.

At the feet of Jesus in heaven, His presence will be overpowering. Words are not sufficient to express what is going to happen. We will bow at His feet, because this will demonstrate awe, humility, reverence and worship, and we will glorify God. That is what will happen in heaven someday.

As we live on earth, should we just wait until we get to heaven to fall at Jesus’ feet and worship Him? Should we save it for later? No! While we are on earth anxiously waiting for Jesus’ return, we can continue to worship Him. There are ways to revere, or honor, God. Spend time reading the Bible. Spend time in prayer. Love others. Love your enemies. Serve the Lord and others. Share with others. Rejoice. Sing or sign songs of praise. Give money to your church. Give your money to others in need. Do what is right. Be holy. Offer your bodies as living sacrifices to God. Paul encouraged us in Romans 12:1, *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

Really, in everything we do as we live on earth, we should strive to revere, honor and glorify God. First Corinthians 10:31 says, *“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

I want to close this sermon series with one final question for you. When you die or Jesus returns, will you go to heaven? If your answer is “yes,” praise God! If not, then I urge you right now to repent, believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, be baptized and worship and honor Him.



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