

Study 0040

Scripture Text: Revelation 4:1-11

Worship is the new series we shall begin in this study. We shall introduce the subject of worship in this study, and consider some other pertinent issues on worship in the next set of Studies. “Worship” is a word that we use in everyday conversation, either with fellow believers in Christ, or with unbelievers. It is a word that is used to describe a service, especially a Sunday service; it is also used to describe the slow portion of our singing during the time allotted to ‘praise and worship’. Worship is, however, much more than these descriptions, and it holds tremendous implications for us as believers in Christ.

Worship involves and implies; adoration, idolization, reverence, and devotion. The word 'worship' is the shortened form of the old English word 'worth-ship', which speaks of the worth or value of who/what is the subject/object of worship. Therefore, to worship is to adore, to idolize, to adulate, to revere, or to be devoted, to someone. Hence, a worshipper, is an adorer, an idolizer, an adulator, a venerator, or, a devotee (someone who is given over completely to serving the subject/object of worship).

It is therefore possible to worship anything or anyone provided it is of worth or value in the eyes or mind of the worshipper. Many people worship objects that they inherited from their ancestors because, they were told that those objects protected and provided for their ancestors. Such people therefore bow to graven images because they want to continue to enjoy the benefits of the protection and provision that these so-called gods gave to their ancestors. When the woman at the well met with Jesus in **John 4:5-24**, she mentioned an issue that must have bothered her, and which possibly bothers some of us today: she asked, “*Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye [that is, the Jews] say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship*” (v.20). To this, the Lord responded, “... *ye shall neither on this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship ...*” (v.21-22).

You would observe that the woman makes no reference to who or what they worship; but to the location of worship. This appears to be the concern of many people today; hence, people believe that if they go to a religious service (mosque, synagogue, church, prayer house, Buddhist temple, etc.), they have gone to worship the One True God; how untrue this conclusion is. The Lord Jesus, however, makes it clear that location of worship is not the issue, but what or who is worshipped. Furthermore, He lets us know that relationship (He said “*the Father*” as the Subject of worship) is equally as important as knowing the One who is worshipped. Now, our Subject of worship in this study and in the other studies is the One True God, known to the Jews as JEHOVAH! This is important because, many people claim to worship JEHOVAH, but when you probe further, you will discover that it is not Him they are worshipping. The fact that a person is afraid of something should not make that thing to become an object of worship. The Holy Spirit, through the lips of Zechariah, John the Baptist’s father, said, “*that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies might serve [worship] Him [JEHOVAH] without fear*” (**Luke 1:74**). Also, in his letter to Timothy, Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, said, “*For God has not given us the spirit of fear ...*” (**2 Timothy 1:7**).

We can thus see that the worship of the One True God (JEHOVAH) must be based more on a personal knowledge of Who He is; which itself should be based on a personal relationship with Him; rather than on our fear (fright) of Him, nor on what we are going to benefit from

Him. When we worship the One True God for the right reason, our fear of Him is not out of fright, but one of reverence and love. And in the end, all the benefits you erroneously thought you would obtain out of fright, become yours and more. Therefore, the place to really begin our study of the worship of the One True God is to know Who He is (not to know about Him), and to enter into a personal relationship with Him.

In our scripture text, we read about John's privileged insight into what was happening in the throne room of God in heaven, and what he documented of what he saw taking place there. He saw the majesty of "*One [Who] sat on the throne*"; he saw the glory of the elders who sat around the throne of God; he saw and heard the awe of the "lightening, thundering, and voices" that proceeded out of the throne; he saw the ever burning "*seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God*" (a description of the Holy Spirit (see **Isaiah 11:2**)); and he saw the awesome looking angels who attend the throne of God. Finally, he saw how the elders, twenty-four in number, sitting around the throne worshipped God: they fell down (lay prostrate) before the throne of God, they cast (or threw down) their crowns (the sign of royalty and glory) before the throne of God, and they spoke words of adoration and honour. This is what the worship of God is all about. We cannot worship God as He should be worshipped if we don't know Him; for worship is about the worth of the One True God! How then can we worship as we ought to, Someone that we don't know, nor have a relationship with?

Although our scripture text gives us insight into the angels who attend to God in heaven, and the twenty-four elders sitting around His Throne It also tells us about the majesty, power, glory, and awesomeness of the One True God. More importantly, we see the manner of worship of God—the angels covered themselves with their wings (so ought women to be covered), and the elders lay prostrate before Him (so ought leaders to lie prostrate before the One Who is called The King of kings, The Lord of lords, The Governor among the nations, etc.). We read of the words the angels employ in their adoration of God; and the words the twenty-four elders deploy as they fall down prostrate before JEHOVAH: "*You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honour and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.*" (**Revelation 4:11; NKJV**)

We can draw the following inference from **Revelation 4:1-11**:

1. The majesty, glory, and power of God is incomparable to anything on earth (**Matthew 4:8-10; 1 Corinthians 2:9-10**);
2. No matter how high and mighty a person may be, he should worship God;
3. A posture of reverence and obeisance—bowing down, lying down, laying prostrate, kneeling down—with one's face looking down is an acceptable position to worship God (**Luke 18:9-14; Exodus 34:8; 2 Chronicles 20:18**);
4. Worship is acknowledging that all that we possess is nothing in comparison to God (**Isaiah 40:12-17**);
5. Worship is acknowledging that all that we possess is from God (**1 Chronicles 29:14, 16; Psalm 24:1**);
6. Worship is casting down all our laurels, achievements, status, position, etc., before the throne of God (**Philippians 3:7-8**);
7. Worship is verbalizing the worth and value of God to you personally;
8. Worship is acknowledging the Authority of God as Creator of all things (**Psalm 24:2; 33:6-9**);
9. Worship is recognizing and acknowledging that God deserves all the glory, all the honour, and all the power that is ascribed to Him (**1 Chronicles 29:10-12**);

10. The one thing that God requires more than anything else from His creation, is worship (**Deuteronomy 10:12**).

In truth, only God is to be worshipped because, He alone deserves or is worthy of worship from all, for He created all things! God is worth more than everything in the world; past, present, future, all put together! Indeed, if a man must give obeisance to anyone, it must be to JEHOVAH (**Matthew 4:8-10**)!

EXERCISE

Please state true or false to the statements below:

1. Worship is something we do while waiting for people to fill up the church.
2. Worship takes place at Sunday service, but not at Bible Study Service.
3. Anybody who has money and occupies a position of power deserves worship.
4. An idol worshipper is a worshipper in the real sense of the word.
5. Jesus recognized that the devil deserves to be worshipped; it is just that He is higher than the devil, and so could not worship him.
6. The worship of God is something church leaders don't engage in.
7. The worship of God should be left to those who specialize in worship—the Choir.
8. You don't have to be in a posture of reverence/obeisance, like bowing down, or lifting your hands in submission to God in worship.
9. It is true that God made all things, but our possessions are the result of our hard work.
10. When we come to God in worship, our position and titles must be put forward.
11. It is permissible to worship angels, especially those who attend to God in the throne room.
12. Worship can be done without words.
13. Where we worship is a very important aspect of worship.
14. All worshippers worship God, regardless of their religion or belief.
15. Tithes and offerings are more important than the worship of JEHOVAH.