

Revelation 4:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Analysis

The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,... This verse from Revelation's vision of throne room of heaven - god's sovereignty, holiness, and worship employs apocalyptic imagery rich with Old Testament allusions and symbolic meaning. The Greek text uses vivid apocalyptic language characteristic of Jewish prophetic literature, drawing heavily from Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah.

The symbolism must be interpreted within its first-century context while recognizing timeless spiritual realities. The imagery would resonate powerfully with persecuted believers facing Roman imperial cult worship, providing hope that despite present suffering, Christ reigns sovereign and will consummate His kingdom. The apocalyptic genre uses symbolic numbers (seven, twelve, 144,000), colors, beasts, and cosmic imagery to convey theological truth rather than photographic descriptions.

Christologically, Revelation consistently exalts Jesus as the victorious Lamb, the faithful witness, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Every vision ultimately points to Christ's supremacy, His finished redemptive work, and His certain return to judge the living and dead and establish the new creation.

Historical Context

John received this revelation circa AD 95 during Domitian's persecution, exiled on Patmos for his testimony. The seven churches of Asia Minor faced increasing pressure to participate in emperor worship and pagan religious practices. Refusal meant economic hardship, social ostracism, and potential martyrdom. Understanding this context illuminates Revelation's encouragement to faithful endurance.

The apocalyptic genre was familiar to first-century Jewish and Christian readers. Rather than newspaper-style predictions, apocalyptic literature uses symbolic imagery to reveal spiritual realities behind earthly events, encourage the faithful, warn the unfaithful, and assert God's ultimate sovereignty over history. Parallels with Daniel, Ezekiel, and intertestamental apocalyptic writings would help original readers decode the symbols.

Rome's imperial cult demanded worship of Caesar as divine, placing Christians in impossible situations—compromise their faith or face persecution. Revelation identifies Rome as "Babylon" and assures believers that despite appearances, the Lamb conquered through His death and resurrection, and all earthly kingdoms will submit to His reign.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 4:10 reveal God's character, particularly His sovereignty, holiness, and justice?
2. What specific encouragement or warning does this verse offer for maintaining faithful Christian witness amid cultural pressure?

3. How does this passage point to Christ's victory and the hope of new creation, and how should that shape your present priorities?

Interlinear Text

πεσοῦνται	οἱ	εἴκοσι	καὶ	τέσσαρες	πρεσβύτεροι	ἐνώπιον	
fall down	G3588	twenty	and	The four	elders	before	
G4098		G1501	G2532	G5064	G4245	G1799	
τοῦ	καθημένου	ἐπὶ	τοῦ	θρόνου	καὶ	προσκυνοῦσιν	τῷ
G3588	him that sat	on	G3588	the throne	and	worship	G3588
	G2521	G1909		G2362	G2532	G4352	
ζῶντι	εἰς	τοὺς	αἰώνων	τῶν	αἰώνων	καὶ	βάλλουσιν
him that liveth	for	G3588	and ever	G3588	and ever	and	cast
G2198	G1519		G165		G165	G2532	G906
τοὺς	στεφάνους	αὐτῶν	ἐνώπιον	τοῦ	θρόνου	λέγοντες	
G3588	crowns	G846	before	G3588	the throne	saying	
	G4735		G1799		G2362	G3004	

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 5:8 (Parallel theme): And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Revelation 11:16 (Worship): And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

Revelation 19:4 (Worship): And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

Psalms 95:6 (Worship): O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

Revelation 4:4 (Parallel theme): And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Revelation 7:11 (Worship): And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Revelation 5:14 (Worship): And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Revelation 15:4 (Worship): Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

Psalms 72:11 (Parallel theme): Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

Revelation 4:9 (Parallel theme): And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,