

# Revelation 5:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

## Analysis

**And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever....** This verse from Revelation's vision of the lamb who is worthy - Christ's redemptive work, authority to open the scroll 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

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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

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does Revelation 5:14 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

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καὶ τὰ τέσσαρες ζῷα ἔλεγον, Ἄμην, καὶ οἱ εἴκοσι  
And G3588 the four beasts said Amen And G3588 and twenty  
G2532 G5064 G2226 G3004 G281 G2532 G1501

τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσαν καὶ προσεκύνησαν  
the four elders fell down And worshipped  
G5064 G4245 G4098 G2532 G4352

ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰώνων τῶν αἰώνων  
him that liveth for G3588 and ever G3588 and ever  
G2198 G1519 G165 G165

## Additional Cross-References

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**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.

**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 5:6** (Parallel theme): And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.