

Revelation Lesson 72 What Happens When You Pray

Revelation 5:8 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.

Last time in our study, we noted Christ's role as the Lamb of God! Wow! What a powerful lesson it was as it reminded us of what our Saviour accomplished for us ol' sinners! Now tonight we're going to examine a very interesting point, one that shows us what really happens when we pray. I call it the Doctrine of Angelic and Elder Assistance.

And when he had taken the book, - Here we again note that (from last week) that Christ is seen in His redemptive status of man, and He has moved about in Heaven already. He ascended and took His blood into the Holy of Holies (per Hebrews 9:12) then re-descended back to Earth (all on Easter Sunday Morning circa 30AD). Then some 40 days later (per Acts 1:2-9) He ascended back into Heaven. Then 10 days later, Christ was seated in Heaven at the Right Hand of God the Father (Acts 2:33-34) and thus glorified (per Acts 2:1-4 and John 7:39) on the Day of Pentecost (Exodus 23:16, 34:22-23; Leviticus 23:17-21; Deuteronomy 16:10-14) which the New Testament phrase (which means "Count 50" or by interpretation: "The 50th day after Pentecost.") for the Old Testament Feast of Weeks. Then we noted in Acts 7:55 that Stephen saw Him Standing. John Likewise saw Christ standing in Revelation 1:13 and again we saw this last week in Revelation 5:6-7. So Christ is anything but stationary in Heaven. So He has now moved back to the place of the Right Hand of God (Revelation 5:1) and has now (in this verse) taken the 7-Sealed Book, which I believe to be the Title Deed and Redemption Terms for the Earth.

the four beasts – Here are the 4 Seraphim around God's Throne. Those that cry out: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty which was, and is, and is to come." (Revelation 4:8).

and four and twenty elders – Here are the 24 Elders – which we take to mean they are a rotating number of Believers (the saved) that comprised the Church (the Body of Christ) while upon the Earth from The Day of Pentecost (circa 30AD) to The Rapture (unknown time).

fell down before the Lamb, – We are here told that both categories: The 4 "beasts" or creatures – the Seraphim AND the 24 Elders – FELL DOWN. In Revelation the word "fell" occurs some 16 times, and in 6 of those times it pertains to "falling down" before the Lord Jesus Christ and/or His throne, to worship Him. (Revelation 1:17; 5:8 & 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4)

having every one of them harps, - Now we need to denote who "them' are. Most Bible scholars and commentators are going to say they are the 4 beasts AND the 24 elders. But, seeing in the furtherance of this verse, we can denote that the 24 Elders (not the 4 Beasts/Creatures) have the harps AND the Golden Vials. Allow me to explain.

The 4 Beasts or Living Creatures are, we have already studied, angels – they are of the Seraphim Order or "ranked" by their 6-wings. BUT, on the other hand, we've previously noted that the Elders are NOT angelic, supernatural creatures, but are rather the Saved, the Redeemed from the Church.

For further evidence on the Elders being saved men, look at Revelation 5:9-11 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and

nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. 11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;”

I want you to note in verse 9 “they sung” the following: “...and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” The group of “they” in verse 9 are the 24 Elders.

Also, in verse 10 we again note that these Elders are stating that they have been appointed as “priests.” Then a quick glance at verse 11 shows the various categories or divisions that God makes: Angels, The Beasts, The Elders. So we must surmise that IF the Beasts AND Elders were ALL described as Angels why should there be a marked contrast? Why would God not simply call them ALL angels. I believe that there the wording is thus so that we do NOT mix up the Elders as being angels.

Now we still have not denoted who the “them” of our present verse 8 are. Look at Revelation 8:2-4 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.”

Okay now we're going to come back to this in just a moment, but I want to include it here for a moment to stress a point.

The Elders are those who were saved from 30AD – The Rapture and thus were a part of the Church, the Body of Christ. Now, they are called priests in Rev. 5:10. Now, while we are alive on the Earth, we the saved, are admonished to PRAY WITHOUT CEASING (1 Thess. 5:17) and we note that we Pray to the Father (Matthew 6:9) asking in Jesus' Name (John 16:26) because there is (one Mediator between God and Man (Galatians 3:20 and 1 Timothy 2:5) which means that all prayers to saints and Mary and etc are NOT heard. We must ask in Faith (James 1:5-6 & 5:15) and must ensure that we are right with God (i.e. - have no sin in our life (Psalm 66:17-20) and that we pray in the Power of the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 6:18).

Now in the Old Testament the average Israelite could not come directly to God, he had to go through a priest, who then acted upon his behalf. This still works today through Jesus Christ our High Priest (Heb. 7:10-14). BUT, we note in the Old Testament that the priests served in various duties in the Tabernacle and then the Temple. So, too it appears that we believer priests will act accordingly. For now we know that in 1 Peter 2:4 God calls us a Holy and a Royal Priesthood and then in Rev. 1:5 we are noted to be a kingdom of priests.

It appears that while on Earth we have the duty to pray. While in Heaven – when serving as one of the 24 Elders – it seems apparant one of our duties will involve “burning the prayers of the Saints” and it seems soldily to me that the Angels and Elders work in unison to accomplish this. But each one has a specific duty in regards to that.

For example, in Daniel 10:12 we read the following: “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.” Notice now two things: 1.) The Lord hears the prayers of the Righteous (Saved and in Fellowship) – 1 Peter 3:12 – so we understand that GOD HEARS the prayer. But now, note 2.) an Angel came for Daniel's Words! So within the

Spiritual Realm, it appears then that a prayer becomes an actual object in the Spirit Realm. So the way I understand it an “angelic courier service” call it the UPS of Heaven is enacted. If you read further in Chapter 10, there was an angelic “war” to prevent the transportation of the prayer – for this was an important one related to prophecy.

So, Angels it seems have the ability to transport or move prayers. Consider Revelation 8:3-4 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.” The Angel seen here, read it carefully, is transporting Incense to offer WITH the prayers, but is not seen to transport the actual prayers!

While it would seem that the Believer-Priests (now) have the right/ability to offer the prayers before the Throne of God.

So, when our text says “each of THEM had a harp” I see that to infer back to the Elders only. The angels sing God's praise (as will we) but we will make use of the harp in addition to our songs we sing. More on that in our next few lessons. But what happens when the prayer reaches Heaven?

and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. - Now recall that God has ALREADY heard the Prayers of the Righteous (the Saved and In-Fellowship Believer) and the angel courier service has retrieved the prayer from the Earth and dropped it off in Heaven. Now, enter the believer-priest who takes a golden vial (bowl) which contains “odours” the text says.

The implication is it is likened to incense upon the Earth. Note in the duties of the priests in Israel (Exodus 30:1-9) was to burn Incense in the Tabernacle (and later the Temple). Now Moses was commanded to make the Earthly Tabernacle furniture after the “Heavenly” pattern (Exodus 25:9 & 40) so if there is an Altar of Incense upon the Earth, there is one in Heaven. On Earth it was in the Holy Place in front of the veil which cordoned off the Holy of Holies (where the Ark of the Covenant or God's Throne was). Which in turn indicates that in Heaven there is an Altar of Incense before the Throne of God.

Now, someone asked me when I was in High School, if all this was/is true, what about those prayers we pray without speaking them? Those Mental “silent” prayers. I think Romans 8:26 might very well shed light on this: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” So to me, when we mentally pray, the Holy Ghost takes that prayer and Camouflages it from the enemy. An Angelic courier, may or may not assist, but it still goes up.

So the prayer is there in Heaven, an Elder retrieves the prayer in a Golden Bowl and then dumps it before the Lord's Throne upon the Heavenly Altar of Incense. Now, IF God already has HEARD the prayer, what difference does it make? Look at Genesis 8:21 “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.” This verse illustrates the principle to me, when God SMELLED the offering, He acted, there in Genesis 8:21 He begins the implementation of the Noachic Covenant.

This does not mean the more we pray (and the more prayers are thus burned) that we will influence God's decision, no, but rather we will hasten His verdict to be sent in His way, manner and timing! Now you know (I think) what happens when we pray! God hears and shall smell it!