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Approximately
1000 words

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REVELATION 4:11

By

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"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (KJV)

I have been meditating on this verse and studying it for the past month and would like to share some of the beauty of these 27 words that the Holy Spirit has revealed during this study.

The place is the Throne of God in heaven. The speakers are the 24 elders who sit on the 24 seats round about the throne. The person addressed is God the Father.

What more beautiful words of praise are there than these? This one verse sums up the majesty of God and the reasons for that majesty. What stronger statement can be made about what man should think of God?

Let's begin by looking at the verse phrase by phrase:

"Thou art worthy, O Lord,"

What does it mean to be "worthy"? The greek word translated worthy in this case is axios. Its literal meaning is "deserving, comparable, or suitable (as if drawing praise)." It appears 41 times in the Bible, is translated as "worthy" 36 times, as "due reward" once, and as "meet" (As in "it is meet that we do this.") four times.(In the KJV). In Revelation 4:11, the translation is also as "worthy" in the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the Today's English Version (TEV - more popularly known as the "Good News Bible"), and in the Living Bible Paraphrase (LBP). The word further connotes a fitness, an entitlement, and a value. Truly, God is deserving of and entitled to glory, honor, and power!

Kuriōs is the word translated as "Lord" (KJV & LBP - "Our Lord and God" in the RSV and TEV) and is one of the titles used for both God the Father and God the Son throughout the New Testament canon.

"to receive glory and honour and power:"

Labein (a declension of Lambano) is the greek word translated "receive" in all four versions. It literally means "to take or get hold of" and is elsewhere translated as accept, obtain, have, hold, and take in the KJV. It is stronger in concept than the more passive forms of receive (dechomai) and weaker than the strong "to seize" (hairēōmai). While this word is translated as receive, received, receiveth, or receiving a total of 131 times in the New Testament (KJV), it is also translated 105 times as take, taken, takest, taketh, taking, or took (KJV). Thus, we can see in the choice of this word a picture of the way God has dealt with man throughout creation: Although He is powerful enough to demand our obedience, He has fashioned humanity with free will so that He can be even more glorified by our giving obedience to him out of love rather than compulsion.

Doxan (a declension of Doxa) is translated as "glory" in all four versions and literally means glory(as very apparent). It is elsewhere also translated as dignity, honour, praise, and worship (KJV).

Timen (a declension of timē) is translated as "honour" (KJV) and "honor" (RSV,TEV,LBP). It literally means "a value, i.e. money or, by analogy, esteem." It is elsewhere translated as precious, price, reverence, and respect in the KJV.

The word "power" is also used in all four versions and is translated from the greek dunamin (a declension of dunamis) and specifically means "force, especially in the sense of miraculous power." It is elsewhere in the KJV translated as ability, abundance, capability, meaning, might, miracle, strength, violence, and mighty work.

Surely, God holds all of these things in His hands.

"for thou hast created all things,"

Ektisas (a declension of Ktizō) is translated as "created" in all four versions. It literally means "to fabricate or found (as in form originally)." While the greeks used this word to speak of founding a city or a colony, it is used in scripture solely to speak of things as created by God.

"and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

The words "pleasure" and "are" in the KJV are used in a somewhat archaic fasion. The literal translation of this phrase might be better given as "and because of the will of You they exist and were created." The other versions render this phrase:

"by thy will they existed and were created." (RSV)

"by your will they were given existence and life." (TEV)

"They were created and called into being by your act of will." (LBP)

Eisi literally translates as "they exist" which is a less ambiguous rendering than is "are" in this context.

Thelema literally means "a determination, choice, purpose, decree, volition, or inclination" and, thus, "will" is a clearer rendering for today's usage than is "pleasure".

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This verse also shows us the uniformity of the message of the scriptures. Throughout the Bible, the major theme is the greatness of God and His provision for us through the redemption of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Here, in the very last book of the Bible, God's final word to man, is a reference back to the very first verse of the Bible:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen.1:1,KJV).

This message is repeated throughout the scriptures. Luke referred to it:

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" (Acts 17:24, KJV).

And Paul, writing to the church at Ephesus, clearly stated that God performed this creation through Jesus:

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:" (Eph. 3:9, KJV).

Therefore, knowing in our own lives how much God loves us and cares for us, how can we avoid echoing these words in our hearts? We cannot. We must say with Jude:

"To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

The End