

# Swept off your Feet

## Beyond Worship-as-Usual

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### CHAPTER 24

## Angels Worship God

### A Consensus of Worship from Heaven and Earth

Celestial beings predate humanity; angels shouted for joy when God established earth's foundation.<sup>1</sup> Worshipers on earth behave like the heavenly host when they bow down because angels set the standard for worship. Facedown reverence originated in heaven, continues on earth, and will extend into eternity.

Bowing transcends royal customs and religious rituals. Imperial leaders may demand obligatory homage, but they did not invent worship. Idolaters may emulate heaven's protocol, but they do not own a patent for prostration. Throughout human history regal nobility along with concocted deities and fabricated idols have received facedown veneration. In Asian cultures, bowing the head or from the waist signifies a customary greeting. Adopting a semblance of worship, performers and entertainers traditionally take a bow before their audience, an act that should provoke a discriminating evaluation. Speculations of its origin range from honoring aristocrats attending a performance to ducking rotten fruit tossed by critical spectators. Social stigmas and scholastic dogmas may influence public opinion regarding bowing, neither influence however, diminishes the angelic standard for venerating God's worth with facedown reverence.

Four biblical references specifically mention angels in a context of divine veneration. Two references describe the heavenly host bowing or falling facedown in worship (Nehemiah 9:6; Revelation 7:11), and two exhort angels to worship God (Psalm 97:7; Hebrews 1:6). Without citing a Hebrew or Greek word for worship, an additional reference asserts that every knee will bow at the name of Jesus, including angels, which may or may not have knees (Philippians 2:10-11).

<sup>1</sup> Job 38:4-7 (NIV)

ANGELS WORSHIPPING GOD				
Worshippers	Times	Hebrew Greek	Association	NAS Verse
The Heavenly Host	1	Shachah	Bows down before God	Neh 9:6
All the angels	1	Proskuneo	Fell facedown before God's throne and worshiped Him	Rev 7:11
All angels Hebrew, 'elohiym	1	Shachah	Exhortation To Worship	Psa 97:7
Let all the Angels of God worship	1	Proskuneo	When God again brings the firstborn into world	Heb 1:6
Every knee will bow	1	Kampto	At the name of Jesus	Phil 2:10-11

1. The heavenly host (i.e., angelic multitudes or armies) bow before the Lord.

*"You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them And **the heavenly host bows down** [shachah] before You. (Nehemiah 9:6 NAS)*

2. All the angels fell on their face and worshiped God.

John witnessed "*all the angels*" standing around God's throne. In this context, "*all*" probably refers to all types of angels, i.e., cherubim, seraphim, archangels, obedient angels and perhaps disobedient angels, etc., rather than every angel with respect to quantity.<sup>2</sup> Fascinated by God's awesome worth, multitudes of heavenly beings fell facedown to worship Him.

*And **all the angels** were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they **fell** [pipto] **on their faces** before the throne and **worshiped** [proskuneo] God, (Revelations 7:11 NAS)*

3. An exhortation for all 'elohiym to worship. Translated into English from Hebrew, 'elohiym may refer to angels or gods.

*Let all those be ashamed who serve [ʿabad] graven images, Who boast themselves of idols; **Worship** [shachah] Him, **all you gods** ['elohiym, also means divine ones, angels, rulers, or judges].<sup>3</sup> (Psalms 97:7 NAS)*

4. A divine exhortation for all angels to worship God. The author of Hebrews refers to angels as "*ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation*" (Hebrews 1:14 NAS).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/pas.html>, TDNT, Kittle, p. 795 (3-21-21)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas/elohiym.html> (accessed 3-21-21)

*And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, “AND LET **ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP** [proskuneo]” (Hebrews 1:6 NAS)*

5. Every knee will bow at the name of Jesus.

*So that at the name of Jesus **every knee will bow** [the NAS never translates the Greek word kampto as worship], of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will **confess** [exomologeō] that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10-11 NAS)*

As we discern God’s majesty with greater clarity, the importance of when, where, how, what, and who we worship becomes more apparent. Now is the time to establish and fortify our conviction to worship God alone, despite demonic ultimatums issued by satanic rulers. The target of each bow declares the focus of our veneration, especially as the beast and its image materialize during Satan’s apocalyptic campaign described in the Revelation.

Multitudes of angels offer our Heavenly Father the worship He deserves. The bible describes angels and elders bowing in heaven. On earth it cites disciples primed with the knowledge of the truth and demoniacs plagued with unclean spirits—both falling facedown. This multidimensional response provides an all-inclusive foundation for worshipers. Ultimately, everyone will worship someone, or something, but the future belongs to accurately informed worshipers who worship their Heavenly Father in spirit and truth.

Jesus prayed to His Father for “*complete unity*” among His followers.<sup>4</sup> This powerful and effective prayer is not a sentimental pipe dream infused with theological fantasy. It highlights God’s will in heaven and activates God’s will on earth. Jesus taught His disciples to prayerfully summon God’s will “*on earth as it is in heaven.*”<sup>5</sup> God’s eternal purpose does not vacillate when circumstances on earth change. He seeks multitudes of worshipers on earth just as He finds them in heaven. Eventually, one all-inclusive multitude will participate in a consensus of praise and worship. Angels and humans from heaven and earth will agree on their assessment of God’s worth—and they will respond with unanimous veneration and cohesive acclamation.

*And **all the angels...** fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and*

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<sup>4</sup> John 17:11, 21-23

<sup>5</sup> Mat 6:10 ESV

*honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen” (Rev 7:11 NAS)*

***All the earth** will worship You, And will sing praises (Psa 66:4 and 96:9 NAS)*

***All the families** of the nations will worship (Psa 22:27 NAS)*

***All the prosperous** of the earth will eat and worship (Psa 22:29 NAS)*

***All nations** whom you have made will come and worship (Psa 86:9 NAS)*

*“O families of the peoples...Worship the Lord in holy array. Tremble before him, **all the earth!**” (1 Chr 16:28-30 NAS)*

*“...**all the coastlands** of the **nations** will **bow down** [shachah] to Him, everyone from his own place.” (Zep 2:11 NAS)*

*“... **ALL THE NATIONS** WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU...” (Rev 15:4 NAS)*

### **Offering Praise beyond Worship-as-Usual**

With perceptive insight, one generation will interrupt history-as-usual by offering glorious praise and demonstrative worship. Comparable to what John saw and heard in heaven, multitudes will converge from heaven and earth to convey multidimensional praise and worship. A time will come when men and women, boys and girls, every person will show their Heavenly Father what He seeks. They will worship Him in solitude, and they will worship Him in multitudes.

Based on global estimates, the sum total of persons living during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century may exceed the entire human population in heaven. Now more than ever, multitudes of worshipers on earth contribute to the epic expressions of praise in heaven. While more than one billion Muslims habitually bow toward the Masjid al-Haram Mosque in Saudi Arabia, our Heavenly Father awaits an informed response from those who know and appreciate the magnificent truth about Him.

When it comes to worship, angels and humans complement one another. They convey authentic reverence from unique perspectives, one by sight and the other by faith. As likeminded humans praise and worship God with the heavenly host, terrestrial and celestial expressions converge. Each gesture in word and deed penetrates God’s heart with eternal significance.

### **Worshippers on Earth as they are in Heaven**

John saw a rare glimpse of worshipers asserting Christ’s worth in heaven. He heard both angels and humans extolling highest praise with heavenly passion.

*Then I looked, and I heard the **voice of many angels** around the throne and the **living creatures** and the **elders**; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying [lego means to say, speak, affirm, or teach; NIV renders it singing] with a loud voice, "**Worthy** is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." And **every created thing** [including **angels**] which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying [lego], "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." And the **four living creatures** kept saying, "Amen." And the **elders fell down and worshiped**. (Revelation 5:11-14 NAS)*

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