Title: The theology of worship and liturgical language of “throne-room scene” in Revelation

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Abstract:

Most Christian worshipping communities today, as Thomas G. Long advises, need to give “therapeutic attention” to their theology of worship. The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church has also done little work in this regard, even though its most treasured passage, the first angel’s message in Rev 14:6-7, encourages Christians to proclaim and restore true worship. Norval F. Pease believes evangelistic efforts will disintegrate “if our new converts are driven away by an irreverent, unsatisfying Sabbath worship.”

The “throne-room scene” in Revelation 4 and 5, usually understood from the viewpoint of prophecy by SDAs, provides a glimpse into what true worship is. This passage focuses on the expression of the “trisagion,” the superlative expression of God’s holiness, which appears only in Revelation 4 and Isaiah 6.

In response to the cry of “holy, holy, holy,” the twenty-four elders and all of creation bow down and worship God. This study examines why this is so and the implications of this passage for determining an SDA theology of worship. Throughout the Scripture, the concept of God’s holiness is inseparably linked with the idea of worship. The importance of the “throne-room scene” in Revelation 4 and 5 has been examined to establish its possible meaning in relation to worship. The very unique framework of worship in this “throne-room scene” shows the “trisagion” as the initiative action for worship.
This study concludes that the worship in Revelation 4 and 5 provides the model of true worship, for it demonstrates that God is worshipped in response to his acts of creation/redemption and his inherent holiness and separateness. The church today should also worship God for the same reasons.