

We just read and heard words from the Apocalypse of John, words that probably sounded pretty strange. But let me start us off with something that might not sound quite as strange. In the very beginning of Paul's letter to the Roman churches, he is making a point about atheist Gentiles. He is being critical of them. And he says this:

***Rom. 1:18*** *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse; <sup>21</sup> *for though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him...**

OK. Paul is making one special point here: the world itself, filled with countless wonders, the world around us and the world above us in the day or night sky, the entire thing has God's fingerprints all over it! I love how Paul states it! ***Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse;***

Paul is saying that there are so many magical things going on all around us that should make us automatically live with an attitude of humility, gratitude, and wonder. Every day we should wake up and say "Wow! What is this place? I think we must be guests in the house of Someone very special. We are guests in Someone Else's universe!"

When I was in my final year of seminary, I had an insight that came one day. I started thinking about music and how it is structured. And I thought "*You know, all of these different sounds have different frequencies and wavelengths, and there is actually a lot of physics going on inside of music.*" You cannot just throw together some notes and have them make a song. In fact, they need to fit together in very special ways. And when they do fit together in special ways it is wonderful. When we just randomly throw them together, it can sound like this (play some half-steps). Yes, this is delightful! No, it's not. But

with a little more careful placement and adding together of notes, you get something like this ( M-ville intro ). When we blend them properly, it does something really pleasant and even beautiful. These notes, and how they add up to make music, this is a wonderful thing. And I happen to believe this is a supernatural thing. I believe it is gift from God for us to enjoy, and for us to use to touch each others' hearts.

It is a gift from God. Let me wrap this up by pointing us to our main lesson today. We read these things and I don't think that we read deeply enough to see the special things that are going on. So very often in the Bible, whether Hebrew ancient poetry or newer NT passages, it seems like most of the time when angels show up, or supernatural beings are involved like those in Revelation 5, what are they almost always doing? They are SINGING! Our passage today is great because it talks about at the end of the age, before God's New World will come to replace our broken world, first the angels get involved, and they SING! How many angels? Thousands of thousands! And then the writer tells us of his vision, *"Then I heard every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, SINGING 'To the One seated on the throne and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and might, forever and ever!'"* BTW this is one reason we sing certain praise songs at the beginning of worship. Why do we do it? So we can learn more of the Bible! **Salvation Belongs to Our God, who sits upon, the throne, and unto the Lamb, praise and glory, wisdom and thanks, honor and power and strength!** This is straight out of Revelation 5! This is what all the world is singing to God as the world is beginning to change to God's new world. How can that NOT be seen as crucially important and just as special as it can be?

So this is what I wanted to say: I believe that music itself is supernatural. It is not of this world, although I appreciate the song of birds so very much, although I think we can agree that we don't hear much Mozart from any birds. Music is wonder, it is a gift of God, and it is God's sweetest language, given to enrich us and touch our hearts. Thank you to all in this place who play it, to all who sing it, and who teach it. May it never end. AMEN.