

REVELATION 4

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Revelation chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

As we have seen in our study of the book of Revelation, Jesus has given to us an outline of this book.

And if Jesus takes the time to give us an outline, then we need to follow it. We can't divide the book up any way we want, God has told us how it is to be divided up and we need to follow what He has told us. If we don't, our understanding of this book will be all messed up and many people fall prey to that.

Back in Revelation 1:19 we see this division that Jesus gives to us, and it is really pretty simple. He said to John, "**Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.**"

Pretty straight forward and, as you will see, it flows perfectly.

The first division of this book Jesus tells us is "**the things which you have seen.**" It speaks of the things that John saw in Revelation chapter 1. In that chapter we have a glorious picture of Jesus and thus, the basis for this book, the unveiling of Jesus in all of His glory as He comes to pour out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world and then He will set-up His Kingdom on this earth!

From there we move to the second division of this book as Jesus tells us, "**the things which are.**" Again, this is simple. Jesus is speaking of the seven letters that He wrote to the seven churches located in the Roman Province of Asia Minor or the western part of modern-day Turkey.

We saw how those churches existed in John's day, that they were real churches. Thus, this second division of this book covers Revelation chapters 2 and 3.

We also saw how these letters to these seven churches were prophetic in nature or they give to us a picture of the church throughout history, from its beginnings to the last days church.

This period of time began on the day of Pentecost when the church got started with a bang as Peter, empowered by the Holy Spirit spoke forth the Words of God and 3,000 people were saved that day! And this period of time continues on until that last soul is saved and the church is caught up to be with the Lord, meeting Him in the air!

We saw that the church in Ephesus represented the Apostolic Church or the church of the first century to about 63 A. D.

As you read this letter you can see that the picture here is of a – ***LOVELESS CHURCH!***

This church had left their first love, Jesus Christ. They did all the motion but there was no emotional relationship with Him.

From there we moved to Smyrna or the persecuted church that was crushed by the power of Rome for their faith in Jesus Christ and as they were, they released the fragrance of Jesus. We saw that this church could be called the – ***PERSECUTED CHURCH!***

This covered a period of time from around 63 A. D. to 312 A. D. where some 5 to 6 million Christians were martyred for their faith.

Then we moved to Pergamos where the church and state united together, first under Constantine and this compromise weakened the church. We called this church the – ***COMPROMISING CHURCH!***

You see, you can't mix light and darkness and that is what they were trying to do. This covered a period of time from around 312 A. D. to 590 A. D.

As we move to the church of Thyatira and onward, these churches are in existence today and only one is worthy to escape the Tribulation Period but the others, if they would only repent of their sin, they too can escape.

Now the church of Thyatira represented the Roman Catholic Church and their false doctrine of working your way into heaven, Jesus did not complete the sacrifice for us. The compromise of Pergamos lead into the corruption of the church of Thyatira or the Roman Catholic Church and for almost 1,000 years, from 590 A. D. to 1517 A. D. this corruption continued on, and it still continues today! This period of time is known as the Dark Ages and we can call this church the – ***IDOLATROUS CHURCH!***

But out of that darkness of the Dark Ages came new life, a period of time known as the Renaissance or “***rebirth.***”

This great awakening or Protestant Reformation was a move by those who loved the Lord and His Word, and they believed that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and not by our good works!

Jesus completed the work on the cross of Calvary for us.

The time frame here is 1517 A. D. to 1750 A. D.

Now out of this great work of God, over time, the church became lifeless, cold, and rigid to what the Spirit of God was doing, and the work died. Just look at the Protestant churches today and you can see this played out. Obviously not every one of them, but many of them have died long ago! And we called this church the – ***DEAD CHURCH!***

Now out of this movement came two branches of churches.

The church of Philadelphia or the faithful church that loved the Lord and His Word represents the first branch. This represented the spiritual awakening of the eighteenth, nineteenth centuries and even into the early twentieth century and it does continue on today.

We called this church the – ***FAITHFUL CHURCH!***

The other branch is the church of Laodicea, or the lukewarm church and they are not even saved – Jesus is outside this church knocking to get in!

This begin in the 1900's with higher criticism and continues today where churches, supposedly Christians are denying God's Word, His deity, all that He stood for and are adopting a social Jesus, a social Gospel where Jesus is left out! And folks, this apostate church is growing fast in these last days and the only way to overcome their deceptions is by our faith in the Lord and His Word!

And we called this church the – ***APOSTATE CHURCH!***

This evening we will begin the third and final division of this book and as Jesus tells us, **“the things which will take place after this.”**

This covers Revelation chapter 4 on through the end of the book, Revelation chapter 22.

As you will see, if you follow the division, you understand where the church is at, and John is going to give to us an amazing picture of what takes place before the wrath of God is poured out upon a Christ rejecting world!

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in Revelation chapter 4, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

REVELATION 4

VERSES 1-2a

As I have said, we are now beginning the last division of this book, according to Revelation 1:19, “**the things which will take place after this.**”

The Greek words that John uses for “**after this**” in Revelation 1:19 is *META TAUTA*.

As John opens up Revelation chapter 4, he does so by saying *META TAUTA* or “**After these things.**”

Now you may be thinking, “*After what things?*”

What did we just read about in Revelation chapters 2 and 3?

John is saying that after the things of the church have been completed, as the Church Age comes to an end, then these things will take place, the Tribulation Period will begin.

Revelation chapters 2 and 3 cover the Church Age, as we have seen, and now we are focusing on what takes place after this.

What happened to the church?

We will deal with that in a few minutes.

First, let’s look at how this last division of this book is broken down.

In Revelation chapters 4 through 18 the events are focused upon the things that lead up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. We see the Seal Judgments, the Trumpet Judgments, the Bowl Judgments and-so-on.

Then in Revelation chapter 19 we have the second coming of Jesus Christ.

In Revelation chapter 20 we have the aftermath and the Millennial Kingdom.

And we then will conclude with Revelation chapters 21 and 22 with the creation of a New Jerusalem, a New Heavens and a New Earth for us to dwell in with our Lord.

As you can see, there is a lot of ground for us to cover so we will be taking our time going through this book because I believe it is important that we understand it.

Now let me give you some groundwork, you might say, that will help lead us into verse 2 of Revelation chapter 4.

As the Church Age comes to an end John sees a door opened in heaven and then a voice like a trumpet sounded, calling him to heaven.

First of all, let me deal with this door that is opened up in heaven for John, and keep in mind that I believe John is a picture of the church.

Remember what Jesus said in Revelation chapter 3 to the faithful church, the church of Philadelphia. He said, **“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. . . . Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”**

Revelation 3:8, 10.

Jesus promised this faithful church, these faithful Christians that He would keep them out of the hour of trial that is coming upon the earth dwellers or those who dwell on the earth! Again, this judgment of God is for unbelievers!

Is this door that Jesus spoke of in Revelation chapter 3 a door of deliverance? I think it very well could be! Yes, I also believe that it is a picture of doors of ministry for us, but I also see this as the door to heaven. You see, we are told that no one can shut that door to us because Jesus has opened it and no one is greater than Jesus!

So we have this door in heaven open to us and then what happens?

We are told that John heard this **“voice . . . like a trumpet speaking with him . . .”**

Now some may wonder, *“Who is this voice that sounds like a trumpet?”*

We don’t have to guess because the Bible tells us, and it is very clear.

In Revelation 1:10-11 we are told, **“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,’ and, ‘What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.’”**

Again, that is clear. We see that it is Jesus who is calling John up into heaven as the Church Age comes to an end.

That should sound very familiar because it is what Paul tells us in I Thessalonians 4:16-17, **“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”**

It is speaking of the Rapture of the Church where the Lord calls His bride home.

Now some like to argue that the word *“rapture”* is not found anywhere in the Bible, not even in these verses here in I Thessalonians.

And you know what, that is very true. I can’t argue that point.

The word RAPTURO is found in the Latin Vulgate, and it is from this word we get our English word *“rapture”* from.

The Greek word that Paul uses here in I Thessalonians for “**caught up**” is HARPAZO. This word literally means “*to seize upon with force,*” or “*to snatch or catch away . . . and conveys the idea of force suddenly exercised.*”

So don't let that mislead you just because the word “*rapture*” is not used, for the word HARPAZO carries with it the same idea.

Now if the word “*rapture*” bothers you, then call it the “*great snatch away!*”

But I like the word “*rapture*” and it is the same thought.

You see, we will be taken out of this world before God pours out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world. And we will be gathered together to meet our Lord!

Think of it like this. Before World War II started, Japan and Germany called their ambassadors home, they left America and went to their own home countries, why?

Because war was about to break out and their countries wanted them to be home before war was declared!

So too with our Lord. Before He declares war on this earth, before He pours out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world, He will call His ambassadors home, you and me!

Remember, this is not our home, for our citizenship is in Heaven and that is where we are called to go, to be with our Lord.

Thus, Paul tells us in Titus 2:13, “**looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.**”

That is what we are doing. And in knowing He is coming back, in knowing we will be with Him, what should we do?

Paul told us, “**Therefore comfort one another with these words.**” I Thessalonians 4:18.

Now some feel that I am looking for the easy way out and the church has always faced persecution throughout its history. So why should I escape that persecution?

That is very true, the church has endured persecution since it started and today that persecution is growing. Let me ask you this. Is that persecution coming from God?

No, that is the persecution from Satan and this world system that is against God!

Do you see the difference?

In the Tribulation Period it is God's wrath being poured out upon a Christ rejecting world as I have said.

In I Thessalonians 5:9 Paul makes this powerful point, "**For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.**"

And The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, "**For God has not appointed us to [incur His] wrath [He did not select us to condemn us], but [that we might] obtain [His] salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah).**"

I think that is very clear!

Now many have questions about when the true wrath of God begins, and some say at the midpoint of the Tribulation Period and others a short time after or the Pre-Wrath Rapture of the church.

This is not difficult to understand, it is really very simple. The Rapture of the church occurs prior to the start of the Tribulation Period and the reason I can say that with such confidence is because the Scriptures are very clear on this.

Think about this for a minute. In Revelation chapter 6, the Seal Judgments, who is opening the seals and unleashing these judgments?

It is Jesus Christ, the only One worthy to loosen the seals and open the scroll. That means that Jesus Christ is pouring out His wrath as the first seal judgment is unleashed, the unveiling of the Antichrist and it will be this man who brings the judgment of God upon this world just as Nebuchadnezzar was used by God to bring judgment upon the Southern Kingdom of Judah!

And listen to how this plays out. John hears the sound of a trumpet calling him to heaven.

The Greek word that John uses for “**Come up**” there in Revelation 4:1 is ANABAINO, (an-ab-ah’-ee’no) and it means to arise or ascend, to go up.

What do you think will happen when the Lord says, “**Come up**”?

John is immediately taken up into Heaven! Guess what? So too will we be caught up to be with our Lord as He calls us home!

For John here in Revelation, it says that he was “**Immediately**” before the throne of God!

The Greek word for “**immediately**” is EUTHEOS, (yoo-theh’-oce) and it means just that, at once or soon!

Again, I believe this is a picture of the Rapture of the Church.

And think about this for a minute.

In the first 3 chapters of the book of Revelation the Church is mentioned 19 times and then the Church is not seen again on this earth until we return with our Lord in Revelation chapter 19.

We have been taken out of this trial that is coming upon those who dwell on the earth, those who have rejected Jesus as their Lord and Savior and the Lord’s wrath will be poured out upon them.

We will see that taking place beginning in Revelation chapter 6 as the seal judgments are opened. And so here at Calvary Chapel we believe in the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church or that we will meet the Lord in the air prior to the start of the Tribulation Period because we are not earth dwellers, our citizenship is in heaven and thus, this trial is not for us!

Listen to what J. Vernon McGee said about this. He wrote,

From here on you will not find the word church mentioned . . . But now the church goes off the air - there is no mention of it. It has gone off the air because it went up in the air; it was caught up in the air to meet the Lord in the air. The church has gone to heaven - that is what has happened to it.

When the church arrives at its destination in heaven, it loses the name by which it was known in the world and other terms are used to describe it . . . she is no longer a church; she is a bride - a bride adorned for her Husband.

The apostate organization, which bears the ecclesiastical terminology and continues on in the world, is not hereafter given the title of "church" either, but the frightful label of "the harlot."

The late Dr. George Gill said years ago in a seminary class, 'There are going to be some churches which will meet the next Sunday after the rapture, and they won't be missing a [single] member - they will all be there.' Why? Because it is the church of Laodicea - that is, it professes to be Christian but lacks reality.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Vol. V, pp. 927-928

Again, I want you to notice what takes place as soon as John heard the sound like a trumpet calling him, **IMMEDIATELY** he was transported to the throne of God! He was in the presence of God.

This should remind us of what Paul said to the Corinthian church in I Corinthians chapter 15, beginning in verse 50. We read, **“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ‘O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?’ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”**

I Corinthians 15:50-57.

In the twinkling of an eye, immediately we are transformed. It will take place that quickly.

The twinkling of an eye can mean the time it takes for light to hit the surface of the eye until it hits the retina.

Now light travels at 186,000 miles per second, which would mean it would take 1.5 seconds for light to travel from the earth and reach the moon.

The moon is 239,000 miles from the earth!

So then, in the twinkling of an eye the light would only reach 1 foot from the surface of the earth. No one will see it happen, but they will certainly feel its effects!

You see, these bodies must be changed because these physical bodies of flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Thus, we all will be changed, or a metamorphosis will take place.

Like a seed when it changes into a flower, or a caterpillar when it changes into a butterfly, these bodies will be changed so they can enter God's kingdom.

All those who have died in Christ and all those who are living in Christ will be changed in a moment, a twinkling of an eye, as we are caught up to be with the Lord in the air and thus, we will always be with Him!

Just as John is before the throne of God, so will we be!

Jesus said in John 14, "**In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.**" John 14:2-4.

The Lord is preparing for us new bodies that we will receive when He comes for us!

And folks, there is a difference between the Rapture of the Church and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ; they are not the same event.

David Breese says this regarding the difference of these two events. He tells us, *“The rapture, therefore, comes before the tribulation, and takes Christians out of this world before that seven-year period of the wrath of God. Notice that, in the Rapture, Christ does not come all the way to this world. Rather, Christians are caught up to meet Him in the air (I Thes. 4:17). At the second coming of Christ, His glorious return, He comes with the saints. In fact, He returns with an army from heaven for the conquest of the world (Rev. 19:11-16). Remember, in that this is an army of His saints (Jude 14), you and I will be a part of that glorious conquest that centers on the return of Christ in power.”*

Folks, I agree with him, I think the Rapture of the church is the next big event before the Tribulation Period begins and John gives to us this beautiful picture as he is called to heaven and immediately, he is in the presence of God, before His throne!

Now before the Rapture we may see the start of the war in the Middle East as Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 tell us. That too is possible.

Now in saying that, let me give you a comparison of the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus and I think you will see that they are two separate appearances.

THE RAPTURE AND THE SECOND COMING CONTRASTED

Rapture/Translation

Second Coming/Establish the Kingdom

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|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Translation of all believers. | 1. No translation at all. |
| 2. Translated saints go to heaven. | 2. Translated saints return to the earth. |
| 3. Earth is not judged. | 3. Earth is judged and righteousness established. |
| 4. Imminent, any-moment. | 4. Follows definite predicted signs including tribulation. It is exactly 3½ years after the Antichrist goes into the rebuilt temple and demands to be worshiped as God. |

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| 5. Not in the Old Testament. | 5. Predicted often in the Old Testament. |
| 6. Believers only. | 6. Affects all men. |
| 7. Before the Day of Wrath. | 7. Concluding the Day of Wrath. |
| 8. No reference to Satan. | 8. Satan is bound. |
| 9. He comes for His own. | 9. Christ comes with His own. |
| 10. He comes in the air. | 10. He comes to the earth. |
| 11. He claims His bride. | 11. He comes with His bride. |
| 12. Only His own see Him. | 12. Every eye shall see Him. |
| 13. Tribulation begins. | 13. Millennial Kingdom begins. |

I think you can clearly see that there is a difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ!

VERSES 2b- 3

Who is seated upon this throne?

I believe this is God the Father who is sitting on this throne.

First of all, how do I know this is God the Father and not God the Son?

Because we see God the Son, Jesus, approach the throne in Revelation 5:6 as a “**Lamb as though it had been slain.**”

Also, we see the Spirit pictured before the throne in Revelation 4:5.

Also, we are told in Revelation 6:15-16, “**And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!’**”

Also, in Revelation 7:10 we are told, “**and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’**”

God the Father’s throne is in heaven, (See also Mark 16:19 and Hebrews 1:3).

Also, Jesus is coming back to set-up His throne on this earth.

In Luke 1:31-33 we are told, “**And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.**”

That means what we read here in Revelation chapter 4 is a picture of God the Father and Jesus is going to be introduced to us in chapter 5 of Revelation.

What is interesting is that John does not give to us a description of the Father, but he gives to us a picture of His glory, that which radiates from His life.

John describes the brilliant colors that emanate from Him.

In Psalm 104:1-2 we are told, “**Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.**”

You see, this represents the glory of the invisible God for light is used figuratively as it speaks of the holiness and purity of God, that there is no darkness in Him at all!

John also speaks of the light being like a jasper stone or maybe a diamond, it was clear.

He also sees a light like a sardius stone or a ruby red stone.

What does this mean?

In Exodus 39:8-13 the breastplate of the high priest is described. And on this breastplate where 12 stones, which represented the 12 tribes of Israel.

The first stone was sardius representing Jacob's firstborn son, Rueben.

The last stone was jasper representing Jacob's last son born, Benjamin.

Their names give to us a picture of Jesus.

Benjamin's name means, "***Behold a son***" and Ruben's means "***Son of my right hand.***"

Thus, it may be saying to us "***Behold, the son of my right hand.***"

Let me explain.

So, we have represented the "***first***" and the "***last***" stones of the high priest's breastplate.

Interestingly enough, the book of Revelation tells us that our Great High Priest is the First and the Last. (Revelation 1:17)

Also, the Bible tells us that Jesus is the "***first-born over-all creation***" (Col.1:15), to whom the Father said, "***Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.***" Once again, we see that the entire Word of God is all about Jesus (Ps.40:7).

Also, in John 1:5 we are told, "**This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.**" The holy and pure God, the clear stone, became flesh and blood for us so that He could pay in full the penalty for our sins by the shedding of His blood. It is as Paul tells us in Romans 5:8, "**But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**" Thus, the shedding of His blood is representative of the red stone.

What about this emerald or green rainbow that is around the throne of God, what is that all about?

First of all, this emerald or green rainbow around the throne of God is not just a half circle.

That word for “**around**” is the Greek word *IRIS* and it literally means halo.

So this emerald rainbow makes a complete circle around the throne of God.

But what does that mean?

Look at the Scriptures and see where a rainbow is first mentioned because that is the definition of the word, biblically speaking, it is called the law of first mention.

The first time we see a rainbow mentioned in the Bible is when the Lord put one in the sky after the flood as a sign or covenant that He will never destroy the world by a flood.

The green emerald is also seen in the breastplate of the high priest representing the tribe of Judah, which means praise.

What tribe was Jesus from?

He is called the lion from the tribe of Judah!

Thus, this emerald rainbow encircled around the throne of God speaks of His eternal covenant with us. In other words, we have eternal life in Him, it will never end!

You see, as we believe Jesus to be our Lord and Savior God’s judgment passes us by and God’s mercy is poured out upon us, which causes us to praise Him!

VERSE 4

Who are these twenty-four elders? That question is hotly debated and for many, it is determined by how you view when the Rapture occurs.

Keep in mind that the number twenty-four in the Scriptures is the number of representations as there were twenty-four orders of priests.

We see that in I Chronicles chapters 23 and 24 as David divided the priests into what we might call shifts. Each group of twenty-four would serve for about two weeks and when they gathered together, they were representative of all the priests.

Thus, the twenty-four elders or PRESBUTEROS in the Greek, represent a group of people, but again, who?

Some say angels or cherubim.

Some feel it represents the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles, a total of 24 linking Jew and Gentile together.

It may sound good, but I don't believe that is correct.

Many believe they are Tribulation saints but that can't be correct. Why? Because they don't show up in heaven until Revelation 7:13-14!

I believe these twenty-four elders represent the church. If you remember when Ezekiel had his vision of the throne of God in Ezekiel chapter 1 and when Isaiah had his vision in Isaiah chapter 6, these elders were not there, why?

Because the church was not born yet, we don't see the church until Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, as the church is born.

Also, they are clothed in white garments, which we see the saints of God clothed in the righteousness of Christ and we see the saints wearing these garments in Revelation 19:8.

The gold crowns or *STEPHANOS* in the Greek were victors' crowns, which again our victory is in Christ as Paul tells us in II Timothy 4:8, "**Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.**"

Also, in Revelation chapter 5 we see a song that is sung that is the song of the redeemed, something that angels can't be.

So I believe that the twenty-four elders represent the redeemed, the church who are in heaven before the throne of God as they have been raptured as the Church Age closed!

VERSE 5

Not only do we see God the Father sitting on this throne, but we also see the Holy Spirit represented by the seven lamps of fire.

I see here a picture of the seven-branched oil-burning lamp that stood to the left side of the Tabernacle, in the Holy Place just outside the Holy of Holies. This lighted the way to the presence of God and it is the Holy Spirit who opens our eyes and brings us to Jesus.

The seven spirits represent the manifold working or the complete working of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, we see God the Father sitting on the throne, the Holy Spirit around the throne, but where is Jesus?

As I have said, He will be revealed to us in chapter 5!

Now the lightning and thundering and voices could represent the judgment of God that is about to be poured out upon a Christ rejecting world! That would make sense since that is what is going to be taking place in Revelation chapter 6 on through chapter 19.

VERSES 6-7

As John looks at this throne of God he sees this sea of glass, like crystal.

What does this sea of glass represent?

In the Old Testament, in the Tabernacle there was this Sea of Brass or the Laver where the priests would wash themselves before they engaged in their service to the Lord.

Here we see this sea as being crystal clear and this could be a picture of all of our sins being washed by the blood of Christ and as we stand before the Lord we are cleansed from our sin; we don't need to wash anymore.

Yes, in this life we need to get rid of the dirt that builds up as we are in this world, and that is done as we read God's Word, but once we go to be with the Lord, when we get our new bodies, sin will no longer affect us!

This can also represent the Word of God, which cleanses us from our daily filth as I have said.

It is as David said in Psalm 119:9-11, **“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”**

And in Revelation 15:2 we see those who come out of the Tribulation Period standing upon the sea of glass or the Word of God. You see, it is the truth, and it cleanses us as we read and apply it to our lives!

Now, these four living creatures described here in Revelation can also be found in Ezekiel chapter 1 and in Ezekiel chapter 10 and they are called Cherubim.

Now their description here is not as elaborate as we saw in Ezekiel, but I find this amazing, as you will see.

The faces of the creatures are all different and I believe there is a reason for that.

They represent the four-fold picture of Christ in the Gospel's, and that idea goes way back to the early church father, Irenaeus and others who saw this.

Let's look at these and you will see what I mean.

The lion is a picture of majesty, royalty and this is seen in the Gospel of Matthew as he paints for us a picture of Jesus as the lion from the tribe of Judah. He is primarily writing to Jewish people and thus, he uses the Old Testament prophecies to show that Jesus is the Messiah as He fulfilled what the Old Testament prophets wrote about the Messiah, and He fulfilled them down to the tiniest detail! Matthew quotes out of the Old Testament some 129 times. The genealogy that Matthew uses takes us all the way back to Abraham, the father of the Jewish people.

Next is the calf or the ox, a beast of burden. As we move to the Gospel of Mark, we see Jesus presented as the suffering servant. In Mark 10:45 we are told of Jesus, "**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**"

What is interesting to me is that Mark does not give us any genealogy of Jesus, why? Because he is writing of Jesus being a servant and you don't keep records of slaves!

From there we go to the face of a man and the Gospel of Luke presents Jesus as the Son of Man, a phrase that is used some 25 times in this Gospel. In the genealogy here we see it go all the way back to Adam, the first man, showing the humanity of Jesus!

And lastly, we see the face of an eagle and we see this presented to us in the Gospel of John as John presents Jesus as the Son of God, a phrase that he uses some 11 times in this Gospel. The eagle speaks of power, majesty, as the eagle can soar higher than any other creature. It speaks of supreme sovereignty. Thus, John paints a picture of Jesus showing us His deity that He is God! Now many miss the genealogy that is spoken of in John, but it is very important. In John 1:1-2 we see this genealogy as John tells us, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”** You see, John is speaking of the eternal existence of Jesus, and attribute of God and thus, He is God!

And so what we see here is Jesus as the *KING*, who came to *SERVE* as a *MAN*, but who was fully *GOD*!

And there is more we can look at, including the camp of Israel and how they set up camp in the wilderness, it is a beautiful picture of Jesus and the work He was to do.

You can check that study out in our in-depth study of the Gospel of John that we did a few months ago, the *Introduction* and I go into great detail about how they set up camp and the picture that it painted for us!

VERSE 8-11

Make no mistake about it, heaven is a place of worship, the worship of the true and living God.

In Psalm 29:1-2 we are told, **“Give unto the LORD, O you mighty ones, Give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”**

And here in Revelation we see these angelic beings worship the Lord by saying “**Holy, holy, holy**” which speaks of the Triune God.

You see, these creatures are totally overwhelmed by the beauty of His holiness and their worshiping Him, their action, represents it.

They not only declare the holiness of God in their worship of Him but His power.

In Jeremiah 51:15 we are told, “**He has made the earth by His power; He has established the world by His wisdom, And stretched out the heaven by His understanding.**”

And they sing of His eternal existence, as Psalm 90:2 tells us, “**Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.**”

That is our God, and He deserves our worship and thus, Heaven is filled with the worship of Him!

Think of it like this, as one author wrote, “*God’s holiness is His utter and complete separation from evil in any and every form. He is absolutely untainted by any evil, error, or wrongdoing - unlike angels (some of whom sinned) or humans (all of whom sinned).*”

As I have said already in this study, I believe that the twenty-four elders with the gold crowns on their heads are a representation of the church.

In Revelation 5:9-10 we are told, “**And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.’**”

That is the song of the redeemed that is being sung and thus, this must be the church because angelic beings can’t be redeemed!

And as they are worshiping the Lord, they cast their crowns before the Lord.

Now, what are some of these crowns?

The crown of life for those martyred for their faith spoken of in Revelation 2:10

The crown of righteousness is given to those who love His appearing spoken of in II Timothy 4:8

The crown for faithful pastors spoken of in I Peter 5:4

The crown of gold speaking of our redemption spoken of in Revelation 4:4

The crown of rejoicing or soul saving spoken of in I Thessalonians 2:9

The crown that is incorruptible spoken of in I Corinthians 9:25

Now, why do we cast our crowns that the Lord has given to us at His feet?

Because all that we do is all a result of God giving us the ability to do them and thus, He alone receives the glory!

Isn't it interesting that we live in a nation that is so blessed, has so much wealth, so many things and yet, look at how our society is so frustrated, so depressed; they just can't seem to get any *SATISFACTION* with life, but why?

Before I answer that, listen to how verse 11 is translated in the King James Version. I think it is a better translation of this verse.

We are told, "**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.**"

You see, people can't find satisfaction in their life even though their life is filled with all kinds of things, because they are not doing what they have been created for, to bring pleasure to God!

Folks, I can't imagine not coming to worship the Lord, I would be here every night if I could, but that is not the only way we worship the Lord.

We worship the Lord in all that we do! And thus, if you want true satisfaction in your life, if you want peace like a river flowing from your life, if you want true fulfillment in your life, you need to submit your life to the King of kings and Lord of lords!

What a glorious place heaven is.

And don't forget that John is just giving to us a glimpse of what it is like. It is far more glorious than we could ever imagine.

But don't miss out on the focus, it is the worship of God. I truly believe that the reason so many people are not satisfied is because they are not doing those things that they were created for, as I have said.

Bring Him pleasure, serve Him, that is what God desires of your life. You can fight it all you want but it will be like running into a brick wall. You will have a void in your life.

God is looking for people who will worship Him in spirit and in truth! You see, you will never be satisfied until you do what you were created for – ***TO WORSHIP GOD!***

And folks, we might as well enjoy it now, for in heaven it is what flows unto Him!

In I Chronicles 16:29 we are told, **“Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!”**

May we be known as a people who do these things, who love to worship the Lord not only when we gather here but throughout our life, in all we do! Heaven is a place that is filled with the – ***WORSHIP OF GOD!***

As I close this evening, we have seen God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, but where is God the Son?

As I have said, we will see Him revealed to us next time in chapter 5, probably in a way that you would not picture Him.

When I first read and understood what was being said in Revelation chapter 5, it changed me forever, the way I think of my Lord and what He has done for me, and I believe it will change the way you think of Him also!

The next big event is the Rapture of the church, and we are looking for Jesus to come, not the Antichrist. Let me share this story with you and I think you will see that if you are not in Christ, you will not be caught up.

We are told,

When I was a boy, I took a tour of [the] Henry Ford factory in Dearborn, Mich. Then we saw an electromagnetic crane move over a large railroad car filled with what seemed to be junk steel. At the flip of a switch, everything in that car leaped up to the magnetic crane.

Then I saw a strange thing: some pieces of steel fell back into the car. I waited until others had left on the tour and then climbed up to look inside and find out why these pieces fell back in. I found they were not steel at all. Lying on the bottom of the car were some old two-by-fours, a broom handle, and some broken pieces of wood. Only objects made of the right component responded to the magnet, the rest were left behind.

- Tim LaHaye

Make no mistake about it, unless you are in Christ, you will be left behind because you have not come to that saving faith, you are not, in a sense, made of the right materials to be caught up!

Let me leave you with these words from Jesus as He tells us, **“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”** John 4:23-24. May we do that!