

The Throne and Glory of Our God

Revelation 4
September 25, 2022

I. Introduction

- A. This chapter marks the beginning of the final section of the book
 - 1. The things which you have seen – Chapter 1
 - 2. The things which are – Chapters 2 and 3
 - 3. The things which shall take place – Chapters 4-22
 - 4. This scene goes through 6:8
- B. A Brief Overview – Things are not as they seem
 - 1. The Throne of God – Chapter 4
 - 2. The Book with Seven Seals – Chapter 5
 - 3. The Great Tribulation – Chapters 6-18
 - 4. The Second Coming of Christ – Chapter 19
 - 5. Satan bound: Great White Throne Judgment – Chapter 20
 - 6. The new heaven and earth; The New Jerusalem – Chapter 21
 - 7. The river and tree of life – Chapter 22

II. The Scene in Heaven – Chapter 4

- A. The Invitation – v. 1
 - 1. The description of the invitation
 - a. An open door in heaven
 - b. A voice like the sound of a trumpet said, “*come up here.*”
 - i. “look” is the number one command/invitation in the book
 - 2. The purpose of the invitation
 - a. “*I will show you what must take place after these things.*”
 - b. Why does the Lord tell us “the things which shall take place”?
 - i. So, we will believe – John 13:19
 - ii. So, we will behave – II Peter 3:11, 12
 - iii. So, we will have hope – I Peter 1:13
 - 3. Why John needed comforting
 - a. In 57 A.D., Nero started his persecution of Christians. He enjoyed seeing believers killed by lions. Peter and Paul were killed during his reign.
 - b. In 95 A.D., Domitian started his evil reign. He had 40,000 believers burned at the stake.

- c. John has seen all the apostles and many friends martyred.
 - d. He himself was cast into a pot of boiling oil and survived; then exiled to Patmos, the Alcatraz of Rome.
 - e. Five of his seven churches were doing poorly; Smyrna was about to face persecution.
 - f. He was about to be shown unprecedented death and destruction that would come upon the earth.
- B. The Revelation: How John was comforted – vs. 2-11
 - 1. He was taken to Heaven – v. 1
 - a. To be of earthly good, we must be heavenly minded!
 - b. “In an ancient form of Chinese drama, plays were often performed on a two-level stage. On the first level, the drama would unfold in the natural sequence of the script, while on the second level the last act of the play would be acted out simultaneously. This gave the audience a distinct advantage – they knew how the story would end.” – Joe Stowell, *Daily Strength (online)* 12-3-07.
 - c. Assurance of salvation.
 - i. See I John 5:11-13
 - 2. He saw a throne – v. 2
 - a. “throne” used 47 times in this book; referenced 77 times
 - b. Other references to throne visions
 - i. Exodus 24:9-11; I Kings 22:19-23; Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1:8-10
 - c. Throne: a teacher’s chair; judges’ bench; a monarch’s estate, his dignity or presence.
 - d. “*one sitting*”: present participle indicating continuous occupation
 - e. Praise God the throne is occupied by our God!
 - f. An interesting fact: the number one command of Revelation is to “*look*” and the number one object is “*throne*”
 - i. When we keep our eyes on the throne, all is well.
 - ii. Hebrews 12:1, 2; Matthew 6:33.
 - 3. A description of the one on the throne – v. 3
 - a. His appearance was like that of a jasper and sardius

- i. Jasper: “an opaque quartz that is red, green or yellow in color” 21:11
 - ii. Sardius: a deep orange-red variety of chalcedony, a translucent quartz commonly pale blue or gray with nearly wax-like luster.
 - b. There was a rainbow around the throne that was like an emerald
 - i. Bow: rainbow, halo, radiance, weapon of war
 - ii. Emerald: a green variety of beryl; any of various green gemstones.
 - iii. John clearly avoids using human forms or feature to describe God
 - 4. Those sitting around the throne – v. 4
 - a. They were seated on 24 thrones
 - b. They are referred to as Elders
 - c. They were clothed in white garments and wore golden crowns
 - i. I Corinthians 9:25; I Thessalonians 2:19; II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; I Peter 5:4
 - d. Who are these 24 Elders?
 - i. Angelic beings
 - ii. 24 Old Testament saints (Hebrews 11:2; I Chronicles. 24)
 - iii. 24 New Testament saints
 - iv. 12 Old Testament; 12 New Testament
 - e. This scene is important: in a very dramatic way it says to John “that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15: 58b).
 - 5. Further description of the throne – vs. 5-6a
 - a. Flashes of lightning. Arrows of God?
 - i. Psalm 7:13
 - b. Sounds and peals of thunder – vs. 8:5; 11:19; 16:18
 - c. Seven lamps of fire: the seven Spirits of God – vs. 1:4; 1:20
 - d. A sea of glass like crystal: this might be similar to the bronze sea of Solomon in I Kings 7:23-26
 - 6. The four living creatures around the throne – vs. 6b-8a
 - a. Their description
 - i. General: full of eyes in front and behind; each having six wings
 - ii. Specific:
 - The first – like a lion: Matthew
 - The second – like a calf or ox: Mark
 - The third – a face like that of a man: Luke
 - The fourth – like a flying eagle: John
 - iii. A common saying in those days:
 - The mightiest among the birds is the eagle.
 - The mightiest among the domestic animals is the bull.
 - The mightiest among the wild beasts is the lion.
 - And the mightiest of all is man.
 - b. Their duty – vs. 8b-9
 - i. They testify to God’s holiness, omnipotence, and eternal nature
 - ii. They offer to God glory, honor, thanks
7. The twenty-four elders – vs. 10, 11
 - a. They will worship their God
 - b. They will cast their crowns before His throne
 - c. They will offer praise to their God – John 12:28
8. Please note:
 - a. The word “church” does not occur again until verse 22:16
 - b. It is referred to in verse 19, but not by name
 - c. The word “show” is used 19 times in Chapters 1-3