

# THE BOOK OF REVELATION: CHAPTER 4

## OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION:

Church Age -- Rapture ---Tribulation (seals, trumpets, bowls, judgments) ---  
Glorious Appearing --- Millennial Reign ---- Judgment --- Eternity...

After this I looked, and there in heaven was an open door. The first voice that I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

<sup>2</sup> Immediately I was in the Spirit, and there in heaven a throne was set. One was seated on the throne, <sup>3</sup> and the One seated looked like jasper and carnelian stone. A rainbow that looked like an emerald surrounded the throne. <sup>4</sup> Around that throne were 24 thrones, and on the thrones sat 24 elders dressed in white clothes, with gold crowns on their heads. <sup>5</sup> From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and thunder. Burning before the throne were seven fiery torches, which are the seven spirits of God. <sup>6</sup> Also before the throne was something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal. In the middle and around the throne were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back. <sup>7</sup> The first living creature was like a lion; the second living creature was like a calf; the third living creature had a face like a man; and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. <sup>8</sup> Each of the four living creatures had six wings; they were covered with eyes around and inside. Day and night they never stop, saying:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, the Almighty, who was, who is, and who is coming.

<sup>9</sup> Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the One seated on the throne, the One who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the 24 elders fall down before the One seated on the throne, worship the One who lives forever and ever, cast their crowns before the throne, and say:

<sup>11</sup> Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and because of Your will they exist and were created.

## CHAPTER 4 OVERVIEW: THIS IS JOHN'S VISION OF THE THRONE ROOM OF HEAVEN...this is like the Oval Office of eternity.

1. God on His Throne in Heaven
  - a. John's vision of the Throne room in Heaven(Revelation 4)
- **After this I looked, and there in heaven was an open door. The first voice that I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."**
  - The Seven Churches of the CHURCH AGE are complete. Immediately following the vision of the CHURCH AGE John sees a vision of HEAVEN.
    - Heaven was an open door to John, he saw it clearly. The door is like a transition from one room to another.
    - He heard the voice of Christ speaking like a Trumpet...
      - John heard Christ LOUD and CLEAR!!!
      - Like a Shout or at the Last Trumpet Call?
    - Come up here...
      - Could this be a reference to the Rapture?
      - Or could it be God simply speaking directly to John?
    - I will show you what must take place after this...
      - In other words all the things that will follow the Church Age...this is about the tribulation events that will follow the Church Age.
  - RAPTURE:
    - There are many reasons why I believe the Rapture has taken place by Chapter 4 of Revelation:
      - Church age has concluded. The mention of the church is nowhere to be found from this point on in Revelation...only references to Israel. Conclusion is God's church is raptured and now Israel is the focus point of God's work.
      - The rapture could come at any moment. Matthew 24 & 25 paints this picture. Two in the field, one is left etc.
      - After the church age we have a vision of Heaven and then the Tribulation. The timing seems correct.
      - The wording of Revelation 4:1-2 aligns itself with 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.
    - We must acknowledge that the text in Revelation is silent on actually telling of the rapture. But the text draws us to this conclusion.
    - The Rapture of the Church could occur at any moment...but the glorious appearing and millennial reign cannot...this can

only occur after the seven tribulation years. So there is a difference.

- The Second Coming can be broken into the Rapture and the Glorious Appearing. This is the difficulty with this view because we are breaking up the Second Coming into two distinct events. But when we review all the second coming texts we will find there are distinct differences. They are describing our Lord's return, but there appears to be two distinct different returns.

**<sup>2</sup> Immediately I was in the Spirit, and there in heaven a throne was set. One was seated on the throne,**

- In the Spirit – unique experience...in which John can hear and see the things of God.
  - Heavenly Throne – John actually saw the Throne room of Heaven.
    - This is a throne of power and rule...this is the throne of Heaven...it is the Throne of all Thrones.
    - John is making this Throne stand out in comparison to all earthly thrones, but also heavenly thrones.
    - This is a fixed point in Heaven that becomes the central point of attention in John's vision of Heaven.
    - Like the North Star...the Throne of Heaven is a fixed point demonstrating God's power, sovereignty, and rule over Heaven and Earth.
    - This is the Throne in which all of Heaven Worships God.
    - This very well could also be the Judgment seat of Christ...but out of all thrones this one stands out. It is the central point of Heaven. All activities revolve around this Throne.
  - One was seated on the Throne...Christ.
- **<sup>3</sup> and the One seated looked like jasper and carnelian stone. A rainbow that looked like an emerald surrounded the throne. <sup>4</sup> Around that throne were 24 thrones, and on the thrones sat 24 elders dressed in white clothes, with gold crowns on their heads. <sup>5</sup> From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and thunder. Burning before the throne were seven fiery torches, which are the seven spirits of God. <sup>6</sup> Also before the throne was something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal. In the middle and around the throne were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back. <sup>7</sup> The first living creature was like a lion; the second living creature was like a calf; the third living creature had a face like a man; and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.**
    - One seated on the Throne = is God. (Triune God; Creator God)

- NOTE: John is describing what he saw. Reading into this too much may not yield significance. But clearly John saw the beauty, splendor, and great value of the appearance of Christ.
  - Appearance of Jasper (various colors possibly green, may even have been a different gem than today) and the Appearance of Carnelian Stone (a red stone).
    - Imagine a Kings Crown with Green and Red jewels glistening in the sun.
  - Rainbow like emerald around the Throne.
    - This is like a Halo that encircled the throne.
    - This could remind us of the God of the Covenant when He placed His rainbow in the sky as a promise to mankind. It is an eternal reminder of God's promise to covenant with humanity.
- 24 Thrones...
  - These are heavenly thrones. So we know that these thrones are in the Throne room of Heaven.
  - Could these thrones represent the twelve tribes of Israel (all of Jacob's sons) and the twelve disciples/apostles? This seems to be far fetching.
    - John did not see himself on the throne.
    - We are never given any description of the 24 thrones.
- **24 Elders**
  - Again, John is describing what he sees.
  - They appeared as human men...old human males to be exact.
  - They are dressed in White clothes – symbolic of purity.
  - They wear Gold crowns – clearly a sign of power and majesty.
  - These could be angelic beings or human beings...remember these are heavenly thrones.
    - I can personally go either way.
    - Some argue that because of Revelation 5:9 having them sing a song about being REDEEMED, this has to be men. Because angels are not redeemed. However, could an angel not sing of the redemption of men? So I am not sure it is a deciding argument.
- From, Before and around the Throne – SIGNS OF JUDGMENT.
  - Lighting, Rumbings, Thunder
    - All of these are signs of judgment.
    - This would not be the eternal judgment but clearly judgment that comes from the Throne.

- The tribulation is a judgment of God. We must make this clear. The tribulation is part of God's plan. It is His judgment upon humanity.
    - What a laser show this must have been for John...truly amazing. This would have put any Superbowl half-time show to shame.
    - God has often appeared in lighting, thunder, and pillars of smoke etc. Mount Sinai is an example is Exodus.
  - Seven fiery torches (Seven Spirits of God.)
    - This was not just a candle to light up a room, but they were BLAZING.
    - Revelation 1:4 – Seven Spirits refers to the Holy Spirit.
      - At Pentecost we have the Holy Spirit fall on us like fire.
      - Many a times when God wants to get our attention we see blazing light or fire...read about Elijah at Mt. Carmel etc.
  - Sea of Glass (Crystal)
    - The key is "What looked like" a sea of glass.
- **Each of the four living creatures had six wings; they were covered with eyes around and inside. Day and night they never stop, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, the Almighty, who was, who is, and who is coming. <sup>9</sup> Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the One seated on the throne, the One who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the 24 elders fall down before the One seated on the throne, worship the One who lives forever and ever, cast their crowns before the throne, and say: <sup>11</sup> Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and because of Your will they exist and were created.**
- Four Living Creatures...
  - John is clearly fascinated by the four creatures guarding the Throne. These guardians are described in great detail.
  - Living Creatures is the best translation.
  - These four living creatures are SERAPHIM (angels). The only other creatures mentioned like this come from Isaiah 6. Their Six wings make them stand out. SERAPHIM are a special type of angel mentioned in Scriptures.
    - Like Isaiah's experience...Creators (Isaiah 6)

- They are there to praise God.
    - They fall down before the ONE – CHRIST.
    - Cast their crowns before HIM.
  - Ezekiel 1:10-11 and 10:12 tell of similar angelic beings called CHERUBIM, but they each have four wings...but they had faces of human, lion, ox and eagle...which are similar to the Revelation description.
  - Could they all be describing the same beings? Isaiah's and Ezekiel's descriptions are so similar, with very few discrepancies.
  - These creatures are clearly PROTECTORS or GUARDIANS of the THRONE.
    - LION – King of the jungle. The Lion is the king of all wild beasts. The lion is untamed and wild.
    - OX or CALF – Animal used for sacrifice. King of domestic animals. The ox was powerful and mighty and tamed.
    - FLYING EAGLE – King of the birds.
    - FACE LIKE A MAN (Human)- The prize of God's creation. Man was given domain over everything God created.
  - The Living Creatures – 'Give glory, honor and thanks to Him who sits on the Throne.'
  - The Living Creatures praise God 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, the Almighty, who was, who is, and who is coming.
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- 24 Elders praise God...
    - They cast their crowns before the One who is on the Throne...
      - He is worthy of their praise.
      - He is worthy of glory, honor and power.
      - Praise as Creator.

-- Pastor Chris McCombs