

Revelation 4:1-11 – The Throne Room of Heaven

So far . . .

Chapter 1 – The unveiling of Christ in glory

Chaps. 2-3 – Jesus final messages to His churches (7 cities which represented all)

Chaps 4-19 – "After these things"

Apostle Paul wrote to 7 cities: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossie, Thessalonica

Ephesians 3:5-10; Matt. 13:17; Rom. 16:25; 1 Pet. 1:10-12 – The "church" and "church age" was a 'mystery'. Old Testament prophets largely focused on Israel but mingled near-term and long-term events sometimes into the same sentence. Jesus Himself did this in Luke 4:18-19 (compare with Isaiah 61:1-2).

Mystery (**musterion**): a hidden or secret thing, not obvious to the understanding . . .

a. hidden purpose or counsel, deliberately veiled by God only to be revealed by Him

b. the secret counsels which are hidden from ungodly and wicked men but plain to the godly.

Psalm 110:1 -- The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." The day is approaching when there shall be a shifting of scenes in heaven and God shall prepare to execute all His purposes toward the earth.

When the church has completed its purpose upon the earth and has finished its witness, or as Paul describes, "when the fullness of the gentiles is come in (Romans 11:25)," that the Lord is then going to catch away His church into heaven.

Paul said, "behold, I show you **a mystery**. We are not going to all sleep, but we are all going to be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. The trump of God shall sound, the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible." *First Thessalonians 4:16-17*, Paul said, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Vs. 1 – "**meta** tauta": 7 times in Revelation (Divine Outline **ch. 1:19**) – **Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;**

1. **Meta** (preposition) with the Accusative (case) means **after**, *always in connection with time* (e.g. Matthew 17:1; 26:32. John 13:7. Hebrews 4:7; 7:28).

"a door standing open in heaven": the same imagery used of Jesus baptism as well as Peter's vision of the unclean food on a sheet coming down out of heaven but the illustration I appreciate the most is at the stoning of Stephen. In

Acts 7:55-56: But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

Vs. 2 – "**in the Spirit**": 1:10 (Vision of Jesus); 4:2 (vision of Throne Room in heaven); 17:3 (judgment of Harlot); 21:10 (New Jerusalem)(In the spiritual realm)

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Visions of throne room: Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1; 2 Cor. 12:2 (Paul); Acts 7:55-56 (Stephen)

Throne: And round about the throne there were twenty-four lesser thrones: [thronus in Greek translated seats]

the Throne is a symbol of sovereign rule and Divine authority (7:15; 11:19; 16:17, 18; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Isa 6:1). Holiness, Perfect Justice, Righteousness, Love, and Joy crown Him as King. Shekinah glory is His garment and precious jewels are as pavement and radiate the light of His glory.

- The word “throne” appears 58 X in the NT; 43 in Rev; 14 in Ch. 4.
- Messiah will sit: on His Father’s Throne Ps 110:1; Rev 3:21
 - on the “Throne of His Mercy” Heb 4:16
 - on the “Throne of David” Isa 9:7 Lk 1:32
- The 12 apostles will sit on 12 thrones and judge the 12 tribes and the angels (Mt 19:28; 1 Cor 6:3).
- 24 Elders sit on thrones (Rev 4:4).
- Unbelievers will be judged at a “Great White Throne” (Rev 20:12).

Jesus said to the church of Laodicea, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne"(Rev 3:21).

Earthly temple

Holy of Holies
Seven-branched candlestick
Bronze laver
Cherubim over the mercy seat
Priests
Brazen altar
Incense altar
Ark of the covenant

Heavenly Temple

The throne of God
Seven lamps of fire before the throne
Sea of glass
Four living creatures around the throne
Priests Elders (kings and priests)
Altar (Rev. 6:9–11)
Incense altar (Rev. 8:3–5)
Ark of the covenant

Vs. 3 – “was like”:

What's with all the stones: Ebenezers, The priestly Ephod, Jesus as the rock, white stone/new name

Jasper: John later describes this stone as “crystal-clear” (21:11) which refracts all the colors of the spectrum in wondrous brilliance – a blazing white light. Jasper will also later appear as first in both the wall and foundation of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:11, 18-19).

Sardius: A fiery bright ruby stone. Sardius is the first stone in the breastplate of the high priest, representing Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob. (Jesus was the firstborn of the dead.) It is the sixth stone in the foundation of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:20).

Emerald. Green hue dominates the multi-colored **rainbow** surrounding God’s throne (Ezekiel 1:28). From the time of Noah, the rainbow became a sign of God’s faithfulness to His Word, His promises,

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and His Noahic covenant (Genesis 9:12-17).

“Rainbow” is the Greek word *iris*, which can also mean “halo.” The rainbow reminds us of God’s covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:11–17), symbolic of His promise that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood

Judgment is about to fall, but the rainbow reminds us that God is merciful, even when He judges (Hab. 3:2). Usually, a rainbow appears after the storm, but here, we see it before the storm.

Vs. 4 – “**twenty-four elders**”: God’s people (the church saints) are “kings and priests” (Rev. 1:6), reigning and serving with Christ. Their joint rule with Christ (Rev. 5:10), their white garments, and their golden crowns all seem to indicate that these 24 represent the redeemed (verses 9-11; 5:5-14; 7:11-17; 11:16-18; 14:3; 19:4). These are the “overcomers” who have conquered because of their faith in Christ (1 John 5:4–5).

Rev. 20:4 w/Matthew 19 --- Daniel 7:9

Revelation 20:4 – Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Matthew 19:27-28 – Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” Jesus said to them, “**Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**”

These thrones are different from the earlier thrones in Revelation chapter 4 inhabited by the 24 Elders. These are the thrones relating to the Apostles and their oversight over the twelve tribes of Israel.

Numbers have meaning . . .

24 courses of priests established by King David (1 Chronicles 24:3-5)

2 - the number of witness

12 – the number of government (tribes, apostles)

24 Elders – 12X2

24 – you COULDN'T BE A KING AND PRIEST IN O.T. (Melchizedek, Jesus, and church saints)

Remember: the Priests 'lived by the Altar' as they had no inheritance (don't cling to the world)

These Elders cannot be:

Angels: Angels are not numbered (Heb. 12:22), crowned, or enthroned. Angels are not

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redeemable and, therefore, cannot sing the Song of the Redeemed. In addition, in Rev 7:11 the are listed separately and distinctly from the 24 Elders.

Israel: the nation is not yet saved, glorified, and coronated. That is still to come at this point in Revelation. Their resurrection and glory will come at the end of the 7-year tribulation time (Daniel 12:1-3; Revelation 7 & 12).

Tribulation saints: aren't yet saved (7:9, 10, 13-14). Only one group will be complete and glorified at that point—the church. Here elders represent the church, which sings the song of *redemption* (5:8-10). They are the overcomers who have their crowns and live in the place prepared for them, where they have gone with Jesus (John 14:1-4).

“clothed in white”: Clothed in white robes (Rev. 3:25; 7:3-14; = the saints of the church through the righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ

“golden crowns”: Rev 2:10; 3:11

- Distinguishing Characteristics:
 - They sing the Song of Redeemed Rev 5:9,10
 - Called “Elders,” “Kings & Priests” Rev 5:10

Elders (*presbuteros*) in NT are highest officials in church; representative of the whole church (Titus 1:5; Acts 15:6; 20:28; 1 Pet 2:5, 9).

Crowns Promised – Rewards for believers

- Crown of Life (Jas 1:12; Rev 2:10) for those who have suffered for His sake.
- Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim 4:8) for those who loved His appearing.
- Crown of Glory (1 Pet 5:4) for those who fed the flock.
- Crown Incorruptible (1 Cor 9:25) for those who press on steadfastly.
- Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19) for those who win souls.

Crowns (*stephanos*): 1 Cor 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim 4:8; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4.

Reward for works (not salvation) Jas 1:12. Never promised to angels; reward is with Him: “Bema” seat.

Revelation 22:12 – Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

While salvation is a gift, there are rewards given for faithfulness in the Christian life and loss of rewards for unfaithfulness. Some people are troubled by the doctrine of rewards because this seems to suggest “merit” instead of “grace,” and because, it is pointed out, we should only serve the Lord out of love and for God’s glory. Again, our “good deeds” are actually a form of worship – an outward expression of the worth and value we place on God and His Kingdom work.

1 Corinthians 3:4-15 – For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. for no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ***Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.***

Vs. 5 – Out of the Throne: Judgment

lightening, sounds, thunder: Mount Sinai,

Exodus 19:16; 20:18 – On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off

“seven lamps fire/Seven Spirits of God”: chapter 1, Isaiah 11:2 = the Holy Spirit

Hebrews 12:18-29 – For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. ***At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.***

Vs. 6 – “sea (laver) of glass”: bronze laver

Exodus 38:8 – He made the basin of bronze and its stand of bronze, from the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered in the entrance of the tent of meeting.

A pure crystal sea symbolizes God’s holiness, and the mingled fire (Rev. 15) speaks of His holy judgment. The crystal “firmament” in Ezekiel’s vision also comes to mind (Ezek. 1:22); it was the foundation for God’s throne. We shall meet this “sea of glass” again in Revelation 15:3 where the saints coming out of the Great Tribulation are seen standing next to the Sea of Glass.

“four (Zoe) living creatures”: They are Cherubim (Ezekiel 10:20) Identified with the Camp of Israel They call for judgment (chap. 6), and give the bowls "full of wrath of God" to the Seven bowl Angels (chap. 16).

They cannot be any ordinary angelic beings, inasmuch, as they are distinguished from the angels in chap. v.8, 11. Neither do they ever receive any commission, as angels always do. On the contrary, they give orders, as angels do not.

They are attached to the Throne of God, and are never seen apart from it. Now from the book of Ezekiel, also we know in the twenty-eighth chapter that that was the position that was once occupied by Satan. That the Lord speaks of him declaring that he was one of the anointed cherubs who covers – who leads in worship.

The number (four) also associates them with the Earth (4 corners, 4 winds). Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Cherubim on Mercy Seat of the Ark of Covenant

Vs. 7 – the Bible associates a *face* with the idea of *person* In First Chronicles 12:8 the Israelite warriors from the tribe of Gad were said to have had faces like a lion, denoting their fierceness in battle.

The lion is the mightiest of wild animals, the ox strongest of domesticated animals, the eagle king of all birds, and man is highest of all creation.

The faces of the living creatures parallel God’s statement in Genesis 9:10—His covenant is with Noah (the face of the man), the fowl (the face of the eagle), the cattle (the face of the calf), and the beasts of the earth (the face of the lion). The wisdom of God signified in the (“full of eyes”) and they proclaim the holiness of God. They are heavenly reminders that God has a covenant with His creation and that He rules His creation from His throne.

shown chart of **the camp of Israel**

Vs. 8 – *Holy, Holy, Holy*: “In Hebrew, the double repetition of a word adds emphasis (verily,

verily), while the rare threefold repetition calls attention to the infinite. Isaiah experienced the same thing when he was caught up into the throne room of God and heard the expression

Isaiah 6:3 – And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

“*Lord God Almighty*,” emphasizes the power of God. As mentioned in chapter 1, the name Almighty is used nine times in Revelation. The only other such usage in the New Testament is 2 Corinthians 6:18, but it is found at least thirty-one times in Job, a book that magnifies the power of God in nature. The ancient Greek word for Almighty is *pantokrator*, with the idea of “the one who has His hand on everything.”

Who was and is and is to come: This repeats another idea from a title of Jesus Himself in Rev 1:8, and refers to God’s eternal Being. It translates the thought behind the meaning of the name “Yahweh.”

Charles Spurgeon put it like this, “Knowing angels should worship God should prompt our worship also. Do we have any less to praise Him or thank Him for? “Do we sing as much as the birds do? Yet what have birds to sing about, compared with us? Do we sing as much as the angels do? Yet they were never redeemed by the blood of Christ. Birds of the air, shall you excel me? Angels, shall you exceed me? You have done so, but I intend to emulate you, and day by day, and night by night, pour forth my soul in sacred song.” (Spurgeon, *Holy Song from Happy Saints*)”

Vs. 9 – “*glory, and honor, and thanks ...*” *this doxology will grow throughout Revelation*

Revelation 7:11-12 – and all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

“*who lives forever and ever ...*” *(again, a title of Jesus Himself)*

Rev. 1:18 – “*Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*”

Vs. 10 – “casting crowns”

The book of Revelation is filled with hymns of praise (Rev. 4:8, 11; 5:9–13; 7:12–17; 11:15–18; 12:10–12; 15:3–4; 16:5–7; 18:2–8; 19:2–6). The emphasis on praise is significant when you remember that John wrote this book to encourage people who were going through suffering and persecution! The

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theme of this hymn is God the Creator, while in Revelation 5 the elders praise God the Redeemer. The praise in Revelation 4 is given to the Father on the throne, while in Revelation 5 it is directed to the Son (the Lamb) before the throne. The closing hymn (Rev. 5:13) is expressed to both, another proof of the deity of Jesus Christ.

1 Chronicles 29:10-16 – Therefore David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. “But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding. O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own.

Vs. 11 –

Colossians 1:15-18 – He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Romans 11:33-36 – Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
