

The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ

Around the Throne in Heaven - Chapter 4

Study Pack 5

“John is at once occupied with the glorious occupant of the throne. We shall never be done looking at him. Eternity will hardly suffice for our gazing upon Him. What a glorious time will that be, when, we shall always behold the face of our Father, which is in Heaven.”

~~ William Pettingill, *The Unveiling of Jesus Christ*, p. 21. ~~

I. THE THRONE IN HEAVEN, 4:1-3

A. v. 1 - come up hither

_____ and then shown the things that will follow the rapture of the church. This has been taken by almost all futurist commentators as _____ (see 19:11).

B. v. 2 - in the spirit

Something supernatural always happened when a person was “inspired” to write Scripture. In John’s case, he was able to be a participant in events in the third heaven that would not happen for at least 2,000 years.

The throne was set in heaven (see Daniel 7). This throne is mentioned _____ in Revelation.

v. 1-2 - There are three raptures recorded in Scripture.

1. The Old Testament Saints - Matthew 27:50-54.
2. New Testament Saints - I Corinthians 15:49-53, I Thessalonians 4:13-18.
3. Tribulation Saints - Matthew 24, Revelation 11. Also, two individuals were raptured, Enoch and Elijah.

C. v. 3 - like a jasper and a sardine stone

The jasper stone and the sardine stone were the first and last stones of the high priest’s breastplate in Exodus 28. The jasper is clear and shining, the sardine stone is a deep red. These colors describe not the throne but the one on the throne. The throne is surrounded by a bright, green rainbow.

II. THE ENTHRONED ELDERS, 4:4-5

- A. v. 4 - Around the throne of God are 24 other thrones. Each has an elder sitting on it. Each elder has white raiment and a crown of gold.

These beings clearly are not angels. They are repeatedly distinguished from the angels (see 7:11) and they sing a song about their own redemption.

Several times in Scripture, the number 24 is used to represent an entire group (see I Chronicles 24-25, for priests and prophets). So who do these elders represent?

Some suggest that they represent all the saints of the church era. More likely they are the twelve patriarchs and the twelve apostles representing the redeemed of all time (see Revelation 21:12-14). If they are the apostles, John was looking at himself.

- B. v. 5 - Lightnings, thunderings and voices are connected with the throne of God. This has been seen previously in connection with God's judgment - Exodus 9:23, 19:16; I Samuel 12:17-18.

The seven Spirits of God are seen here. Daniel Webster asked, “_____”

III. THE FOUR BEASTS, 4:6-8

- A. v. 6-8 - These creatures are reminiscent of the cherubim as seen in Ezekiel 1, 3, 8, 10 and the seraphim as seen in Isaiah 6. In both cases these supernatural creatures hover around the throne of God and honor him.

Some object to calling these creatures (beasts) angels because they are clearly created beings. But angels are also created beings. As with the cherubim and seraphim, these beasts seem to be a higher order of angels. There are similarities to both cherubim and seraphim but not an exact match with either.

These beings cry out Holy, Holy, Holy, and do not rest either day or night.

IV. THE WORSHIP OF THE CREATOR IN HEAVEN, 4:9-11

- A. v. 9-10 - The four beasts and the 24 elders join together in giving honor to the Father.

He is honored here for being _____.

B. v. 11 - The purpose of all creation is stated here.

All of creation was designed _____,
(see Colossians 1:16; Proverbs 16:4; Hebrews 2:10; Isaiah 43:7).