***“Reviewing Revelation”—Chapter 4-5***

**Revelation 4 - Before the Throne of God**



From Revelation 4 through 19 we have a section mainly concerned with God's judgment upon the world preceding Jesus' earthly reign, the period known as the "Messianic Woes" or the "Great Tribulation." TUP TO CHAPTER 4, ALL TITLES FOR CHRIST HAVE BEEN GENTILE IN ORIGIN. FROM THIS POINT ON, EVERY TITLE OF JESUS WILL BE JEWISH IN ORIGIN. God's judgments are announced by a seven-sealed scroll, seven trumpets, seven signs, and seven bowls that pour out God's wrath. Revelation four introduces us to the place judgment comes from: God's throne in heaven. The pattern is significant. Jesus finished speaking to and dealing with the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, and all churches are comprehended in the seven. Now, after dealing with the church, Jesus called John up to heaven, "catching him away" with a voice that sounded **like a trumpet**. All this happened *before* the great wrath that will be described beginning at Revelation 6. As that great judgment on the earth unfolded, John - a representative of the church - was in heaven, looking down on earth. ***The Outline of Revelation:* 1. Things which you have seen, Jesus Christ, (Chapter 1), 2. The things which are, The Churches, 2-3) and 3. The things which shall be after these things, The Tribulation and Millennium (4-22). \*\*\*Things to know: 1. Rev. 4:1-Rapture, 2. Rev. 6:2-Antichrist appears, 3. Rev. 6:17-Tribulation begins. Rev. 4:1 is a “tie up” to one more ‘loose string’/question ‘hanging’ in the Bible…\*\*The answer to Matthew16:28, “Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom,” is John’s being “called up” to heaven in Rev. 4:1. Thus, John was permitted to live until, in vision, he saw the Return of the Lord. Significantly, the word *church* never occurs in the chapters describing this period of judgment on earth, nowhere in Revelation chapters 4 through 19. 45 times Revelation refers to “thrones;” 14 times in this chapter alone, therefore Revelation 4 is called the “Throne Chapter.” This term is only used 15 other times in the New Testament. “Church” is not mentioned again in Revelation!**



**OUTLINE FOR CHAPTERS 4-5**

1. **The Harpazo Revelation 4:1**
2. **Throne of God 4:2-3**
3. **24 Elders 4:4**
4. **7 Lamps Burning 4:5**
5. **Sea of Glass 4:6**
6. **4 Living Creature with 4 Faces 4:6-8**
7. **7-Sealed Scroll and 24 Elders Identified Revelation 5**

**“1, After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”**

1. **Taking** [**Revelation 1:19**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:19&t1=en_nas)**, “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter,” as an outline of the entire book, chapter four begins the third section: “*the things which shall be hereafter*.” Discuss.**
	1. **Elaborate on the two places, both underlined, in which the phrase, “*after this* (*meta tauta* in ancient Greek),” matches** [**Revelation 1:19**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:19&t1=en_nas) **and is repeated twice in** [**Revelation 4:1**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:1&t1=en_nas)**.** Certainly this is a marking point for beginning the third division of [Revelation 1:19](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:19&t1=en_nas).
2. **Elaborate on Chapter four’s heavenly perspective, which seems to look down on the earth.**
	1. **Compare with** [**Isaiah 6:1-8**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+6:1-8&t1=en_nas)**, “**6 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.5Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.6Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:7And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.8Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me,” **Ezekiel 1:5-11, “**Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. 6And every one had four faces, and everyone had four wings. 7And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. 8And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. 9Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. 10As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. 11Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies, “**and in passages describing the Tabernacle, which symbolically describe heaven (Exodus 25-32 and 35-40).**
3. **Note that John is actually seeing, hearing, and experiencing this “unveiling.”**
	1. **Refer to “I will show thee,” Revelation 4:1, “**After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter,” **and 21:10, “**And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”
	2. **See also, “I looked.” Used 70 times in Revelation.**
	3. **“I saw,” 35 times.**
	4. **“I beheld,” 7 times.**
	5. **“I heard,” 23 times, and all the “sound” passages display on “loud.”**
4. **Review the “harpazo.”**
	1. **Review the oldest “rapture” verse in the Bible, Job 19:25-27, "** For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”
	2. **I Thessalonians 4:13-18, “**But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.18Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
	3. **Note the “trump of God” reference. It is only two places in the Bible, here and on Mt. Sinai, Exodus 19:16, “**And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.” **Compare.**
	4. **Luke 24:39, “**Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”
	5. **I Corinthians 15:50, “**Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”
	6. **John 14:1-3, “**Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2In 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.3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” **(this is the first hint of the rapture, and He makes the promise to us!)**
	7. **O.T.—Isaiah 26:19-21,** Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. 20Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. 21For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain,” **Zephaniah 2:3, “**Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger,” **Psalm 27:5, “**For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.”
5. **List seven “raptures” found in the Bible.**
	* 1. **Enoch, Genesis 5:24, “**And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him,” **Hebrews 11:5, “**By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”
		2. **Elijah, 2 Kings 2:1, 11, “**And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal,” **and** “And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.”
		3. **Jesus, Mark 16:19, “**So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God,” **Acts 1:9-11, “**And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven,”  **and Revelation 12:5, “**And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne,” **man-child “caught up.”**
		4. **Philip, Acts 8:39, “**And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”
		5. **Paul, 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, “**I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth ;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth ;) 4How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”
		6. **Body of Christ, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “**Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
		7. **John, Revelation 4:1, “**After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”
6. **Talk about the “physics” of the resurrected body, “the house.” Use 2 Corinthians 5:1-2, “**For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven,” **Jude 6, “**And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” **Used only twice in the Bible.**
7. **Re-visit the Jewish Wedding; remind yourself of the significance of the importance parallel between it and the Rapture of the Church.**
	1. **The Betrothal, Ketubah; see Isaiah 49:18, “**Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth,” **61:10, “**I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels,” **Judges 14:10-11, “**So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.11And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him,” **Jeremiah 2:32, “**Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number,” **and Psalm 45:8-15, “**8All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. 9Kings' daughters were among thy honorable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. 10Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; 11So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. 12And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour. 13The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.14She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.15With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.”
	2. **Bridegroom departs to Father’s house, room addition preparation, bride prepares for His imminent return.**
	3. **Surprise gathering, Jeremiah 7:34, “**Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate,” **16:9, “**For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride,” **25:10, “**Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle,”  **Psalm 45:8-45, and Matthew 25:1-13…Huppah, wedding.**
	4. **Seven-day Marriage Supper, Judges 14:12, “**And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments,” **Matthew 9:15, “**And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast,” **22:11-14, “**And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 14For many are called, but few are chosen,” **and John 2:11, “**This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.”
	5. **Covenant established, I Corinthians 11:25, “**After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”
	6. **Purchase price, I Corinthians 6:19-20, “**What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?20For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”
	7. **Bride set-apart, Ephesians 5:25-27, “**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,27That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish,” **I Corinthians 1:2, “**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish,” **6:11, “**And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,”  **Hebrews 10:10, “**By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,”**13:12, “**Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”
	8. **Bridegroom left for Father’s House.**
	9. **Escort to accompany Him upon His return to gather His Bride, I Thessalonians 4:16-17, “**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
	10. **Compare this with “the marriage fulfilled” covenant.**
		1. **Use I Corinthians 11:25-16, “**After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.26For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.
		2. **The covenant established.**
		3. **See I Corinthians 6:19-20, “**19What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?20For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's,” **the purchase price.**
		4. **Review Ephesians 5:25-27, “**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish,” **I Corinthians 1:2, “**Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours,” **6, “**Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you**,” 6:11, “**And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,” **Hebrews 10:10, “**By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” **and 13:12, “**Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate,” **the bride set-apart.**
		5. **Examine I Corinthians 11:25-26, “**After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come,” **reminded of the covenant. \*\*See i.**
		6. **Bridegroom left for Father’s house.**
		7. **Elaborate on I Thessalonians 4:16-17, “**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
		8. **Escort to accompany Him upon His return to gather His bride, “**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first,” I Thessalonians 4:16. ARCHANGEL, PROBABLY MICHAEL.

**4 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.**

1. **Describe the scene with John entering heaven.** After these things: Revelation chapters 2 and 3 spoke to the churches, and the *seven churches* comprehended all churches. After Jesus was finished speaking to the churches, after these things, John experienced the vision of Revelation 4.
	1. **Is the voice speaking to John at this point, the same voice heard in Revelation 1:10, “**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet**?”** And the first voice which I heard: The first voice that spoke to John in [Revelation 1:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:10&t1=en_nas) spoke to him again here - the voice of Jesus. Jesus called John up to heaven, through a door standing open in heaven.
2. **Who is speaking?** Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this: John will be shown things that concern the future (which must take place after this), not John's present day. These events have yet to be fulfilled in any sort of literal sense; they can only be said to have been fulfilled by making them wildly symbolic. Therefore, we regard what Jesus will show John in the following chapters of Revelation as belonging to the future, and as proceeding the coming reign of Jesus on earth.
3. **Note the “trumpet” reference here. Review I Thessalonians 4:16-17.** Like a trumpet . . . Come up here: **Many see John's going up to heaven as a symbol of the rapture of the church. John was called up to heaven by a voice that sounds like a trumpet, just as the church will be as described in** [**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Thessalonians+4:16-17&t1=en_nas)**.**

**2And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.**

1. **What is “in the Spirit**?” John already said he was *in the Spirit* at [Revelation 1:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:10&t1=en_nas). See Revelation 1:10. This was yet a different experience, as John came to heaven and a heavenly perspective.
	1. **Compare with Paul’s experience in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, “**It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter
	2. **Where was his body?** Was John's body in heaven also, or was it just his spirit? This is impossible to know. Paul, when he had his heavenly experience, didn't know if he was *in the body* or not ([2 Corinthians 12:1-4](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Corinthians+12:1-4&t1=en_nas)).
2. **Elaborate on “the throne.” And behold, a throne**: This **throne** was what first impressed John, and it is the centerpiece of this vision. John was fixated on the occupied **throne**, and everything else is described in relation to this **throne**. The word “throne” appears 58 times in the N. T. (43 in Revelation, with 14 in Chapter 4.)
	1. **Review the Messiah’s “throne**.”
		1. **Sitting on His Father’s throne, Psalm 110:1, “**The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,” **Revelation 3:21, “**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.”
		2. **“The throne of His Mercy,” Hebrews 4:16, “**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
		3. **“The Throne of David,” Isaiah 9:7, “**Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this,” **and Luke 1:32, “**He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.”
		4. **Twelve apostles will sit on 12 thrones, Matthew 19:28, “**And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” **I Corinthians 6:3, “**Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?”
		5. **Twenty-four elders sit on thrones, Revelation 4:4, “**And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”
		6. **“Great White Throne Judgment,” Revelation 20:12, “**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” **And One sat on the throne**: The throne is not empty. There is some **One** who sits on this great heavenly throne. The throne is a powerful declaration of not merely God's *presence*, but of His *sovereign*, *rightful reign*, and His prerogative to judge.

**3And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.**

1. **Describe the “throne.”** The description rather aims to point out the surrounding *glory* and *effulgence* than the *person* of the almighty King." (Clarke) **Like jasper and a sardius stone in appearance**: Instead of describing a specific form or figure, John described emanations of glistening light in two colors: white (**jasper** may mean "diamond") and red (**sardius**). **JASPER, POSSIBLY DIAMOND, WAS THE STONE OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN, THE LAST STONE OF THE PRIEST’S BREASTPLATE, AND MEANS “SON OF MY RIGHT HAND.” THE SARDIUS, THE FIRST STONE OF THE BREASTPLATE, WAS OF THE TRIBE OF REUBEN, RED IN COLOR, AND MEANS, “BEHOLD, A SON.” REVELATION 21:10-11, “**And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,11Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”
	1. **Why these particular gems? See Matthew 28:1-3, “**In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.2And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.3His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow,” **and Exodus 39:8-13**. ***Perhaps these two colors are meant to communicate the glory of the empty tomb (white,*** [***Matthew 28:1-3***](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+28:1-3&t1=en_nas)***) and the sacrificial love of Calvary (red, indicating blood). Or, perhaps they are linked with the first and last gems in the high priest's breastplate (***[***Exodus 39:8-13***](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+39:8-13&t1=en_nas)***).***And he made the breastplate of cunning work, like the work of the ephod; of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. 9It was foursquare; they made the breastplate double: a span was the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, being doubled. 10And they set in it four rows of stones: the first row was a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this was the first row. 11And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. 12And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. 13And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper: they were enclosed in ouches of gold in their inclosings.”
	2. **Talk about “the rainbow.” Use Genesis 9:11-17, “**And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth.12And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:13I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.14And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:15And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.16And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.17And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth,” **and Exodus 24:10, “**And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.” **And there was a rainbow around the throne**: The throne was surrounded by a green-hued rainbow (**in appearance like an emerald**). The rainbow is a reminder of God's commitment to His covenant with man ([Genesis 9:11-17](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+9:11-17&t1=en_nas)). **A rainbow around the throne** is a remarkable thing, showing that God will always limit Himself by His own promises. Trapp on the **rainbow**: "Which is *signum gratiae et foederis*, a sign of grace and the covenant of mercy, which is always fresh and green about Christ's throne of grace."

**4And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.**

1. **Who are the 24 elders? round the throne were twenty-four thrones**: Before the elders caught John's eye, he noticed the **twenty-four thrones** they sat on. **Clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads**: The **white robes** and **crowns** of the elders seem to indicate that they are indeed human beings - in glory, of course.
	1. **Why are they sitting on thrones?** These twenty-four elders sat on lesser thrones, **around the throne**.
	2. **Later John will mention their song of worship, the song “of the redeemed,” in** [**Revelation 4:10-11**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:10-11&t1=en_nas) **and 5:9-10. What does this represent?** In [Revelation **5:9-10**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+5:9-10&t1=en_nas), the twenty-four elders sang a song of praise to Jesus, and they cried out: *For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation*. In that passage, the twenty-four elders clearly spoke as representatives of all God's people, of the great company of the redeemed.
	3. **What do the white robes represent? See Revelation 3:5-18, “**He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. 7And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. 13He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. 14And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;15I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.16So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.17Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:18I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see,” **6:11, “**And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled,” **7:9, “**After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,” **13-14, “**And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” **Isaiah 61:10, “**I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he **hath clothed me with the garments of salvation**, he hath covered me with the **robe of righteousness**, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” Angels are sometimes presented in white robes or garments ([Mark 16:5](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Mark+16:5&t1=en_nas); [John 20:12](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=John+20:12&t1=en_nas); [Acts 1:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Acts+1:10&t1=en_nas)), but saints also have white robes ([Revelation 6:11](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+6:11&t1=en_nas), [7](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+6:7&t1=en_nas):9, 13-14) as a picture of their imputed righteousness ([Isaiah 61:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+61:10&t1=en_nas), [Revelation 3:5-18](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+3:5-18&t1=en_nas)).
	4. **What are the crowns of gold? See Revelation 2:10, “**Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,” **3:11, “**Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown,”  **and I Peter 5:4, “**And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”  **Do these indicate that these elders cannot be angels? Use I Corinthians 9:25, “**And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible,” **2 Timothy 4:8, “**Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” However, **we never see angels *crowned*** but believers will be ([1 Corinthians 9:25](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Corinthians+9:25&t1=en_nas); **2 Timothy 4:8,** “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing,”;[**1 Peter 5:4**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Peter+5:4&t1=en_nas)**, “**And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”).
		1. **Elaborate on this--** We are *joint heirs with Christ* ([**Romans 8:17**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+8:17&t1=en_nas)**, “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”**), and we will *reign with Him* ([**2 Timothy 2:12**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Timothy+2:12&t1=en_nas)**, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.”).** Therefore, redeemed, glorified man sits enthroned with Jesus. On lesser thrones, to be sure, but thrones none the less.
		2. **Define “crowns.”**
			1. **Crown of life, James 1:12, “**Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,”  **and Revelation 2:10, “**Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” **for those who have suffered for His sake.**
			2. **Crown of Righteousness, 2 Timothy 4:8, ““**Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” **for those who love His appearing.**
			3. **Crown of Glory, I Peter 5:4, “**And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” **for those who fed the flock.**
			4. **Crown Incorruptible, I Corinthians 9:25, “**And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible,” **for those who press on steadfast.**
			5. **Crown of Rejoicing, I Thessalonians 2:19, “**For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” **for those who win souls.**
			6. **Crowns, stephanos, I Corinthians 9:25, I Thessalonians 2:19, 2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, and I Peter 5:4, reward for works, and never promised to angles….REWARD IS WITH HIM AND GIVEN AT THE “BEMA” SEAT, AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.**
	5. **Define elders.** “Presbuteros,” highest officials in church, represents the whole church. **Use Titus 1:5,** “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee,” **Acts 15:6,** “And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter,” **20:28,** “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,” **and I Peter 2:5**, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ,” **and 9,** “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

**5And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.**

1. **Compare “And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices**,” **with God’s fearful presence at Mount Sinai” in Exodus 19:16-19, “**And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. 17And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. 18And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.19And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice,” **20:18-19, “**And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.19And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” **The lightning, thunder, voices and fire are reminiscent of God's fearful presence at Mount Sinai (**[**Exodus 19:16-19**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+19:16-19&t1=en_nas) **and 20:18-19). They communicate the awe associated with the throne of God.**
2. **What are “The Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne**?” Refer to **Revelation 1:4,** “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne,” **and Isaiah 11:2,** “And the **spirit of the Lord** shall rest upon him, **the spirit of wisdom** and **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel** and **might**, the spirit of **knowledge** and of the **fear of the Lord**.” The Holy Spirit (the **seven Spirits of God**, as referred to in [Revelation 1:4](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:4&t1=en_nas) and [Isaiah 11:2](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+11:2&t1=en_nas)) is represented by seven burning **lamps**.
	1. **Look at Matthew 3**:**16, “**And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him,” **and Acts 2:3, “**And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” In other passages He is represented as a **dove (**[**Matthew 3:16**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+3:16&t1=en_nas)**) or a flame of fire (**[**Acts 2:3**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Acts+2:3&t1=en_nas)**).** The lamps of fire are important because the Holy Spirit is not *ordinarily* visible.

**6And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal:**

1. **Discuss “A sea of glass**.” Is this sea really made of **glass**, or did it just look like it? Commentators are divided on this point. For example, Robertson says, "appearance, not material" and Alford says, "material, not appearance." Whether it *looks* like glass or is actually *made of glass*, it is the *finest* **glass, like crystal**.
	1. **Compare with the laver in the Tabernacle, Ephesians 5:26, “**That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the **washing of water by the word.”** **A sea**: This body of water before the throne is reminiscent of the laver in the Tabernacle, and our ***washing of the water of the word*** ([Ephesians 5:26](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ephesians+5:26&t1=en_nas)).
	2. **Review, "The word is to us a crystal glass, giving us a clear sight of God and of ourselves,** [**2 Corinthians 3:18**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Corinthians+3:18&t1=en_nas)**, “**But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,” [**James 1:23**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=James+1:23&t1=en_nas)**, “**For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:**"**

**6b-8a,”…. and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within.”**

1. **Re-visit who are they “Four living creatures.” Compare with** [**Ezekiel 1:4-14**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ezekiel+1:4-14&t1=en_nas)**, “**And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. 5Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. 6And every one had four faces, and everyone had four wings. 7And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. 8And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. 9Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.10As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.11Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. 12And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went. 13As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. 14And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning,” **and 10:20-22, “**This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims. 21Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. 22And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward,” **we understand these creatures to be *cherubim*, the spectacular angelic beings surrounding the throne of God. Satan was once one of these high angelic beings,** according to [Ezekiel 28:14](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ezekiel+28:14&t1=en_nas), “**Full of eyes in front and in back . . . full of eyes around and within**: Their multitude of eyes indicates these **living creatures** (not "beasts" as in the KJV) are not blind instruments or robots. They know and understand, and have greater insight and perception than any man.
	1. **Parallel with Ezekiel 28:14, “**Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire,” **Satan.**
	2. **Are they “the Cherubim?” Use** [**Exodus 25:8-9, "**And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.9According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it,” **17-22**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+25:17-22&t1=en_nas)**, “**And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. 18And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. 19And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. 20And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. 21And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.22And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel,” **and 26:1-31.** Were also prominent in design of the tabernacle, particularly in the Most Holy Place ([Exodus 25:17-22](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+25:17-22&t1=en_nas) and 26:1-31). **The Scriptures show us that the tabernacle is a model of the throne of God, in some manner (**[**Exodus 25:8-9**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+25:8-9&t1=en_nas)**).**
	3. **Discuss their worship. See Romans 12:1, “**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,” **John 4:22-24, “**22Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.24God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” The way these super-intelligent beings worship God reminds us that *our worship must be intelligent*. "Our service must not be rash but reasonable, [Romans 12:1](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+12:1&t1=en_nas), such as wherefore we can render a reason. “The word *beast* is very improperly used here and elsewhere in this description. *Wycliffe* first used it, and translators in general have followed him in this uncouth rendering." (Clarke)
	4. **Describe the living creatures. Compare with Ezekiel 1:6-20. (\*\*SEE #18) Like a lion . . . like a calf . . . a face like a man . . . like a flying eagle**: John described four cherubim, each with a different **face**. From comparison with [Ezekiel 1:6-10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ezekiel+1:6-10&t1=en_nas), we can see that each of the cherubim have *four faces*, and at the moment, John saw each one of the four different faces pointed in his direction. The significance of these four faces has been interpreted in many ways. The four faces have been said to represent the elements, the cardinal virtues, the faculties and powers of the human soul, the patriarchal churches, the great apostles, the orders of churchmen, the principle angels, and so forth.
		1. **Review Numbers 2:3, “**And on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch throughout their armies: and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah,” **10, “**On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben according to their armies: and the captain of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.” Some commentators say these four creatures speak of the ensigns of the head tribes as Israel camped in four groups around the tabernacle in the wilderness. [Numbers 2:3](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Numbers+2:3&t1=en_nas), [2](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Numbers+2:2&t1=en_nas):10, 2:18, and 2:25 mention this organization of the tribes under these four heads, but does not assign "mascots" to tribal banners. Seiss, Clarke, and Poole each mention this approach, and cite "Jewish writers" (Seiss), " the Talmudists" (Clarke), and "the learned Mede . . . from the Rabbins" (Poole). Poole explains: "That these were the four creatures whose portraitures were in the four ensigns of the Israelites as they were marshalled into four companies, allotting the men of three tribes to each company. Judah's standard had a lion in its colors, according to Jacob's prophecy of that tribe; [Genesis 49:9](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+49:9&t1=en_nas), Ephraim had an ox, Reuben had a man, Dan an eagle. This the learned Mede proves from the Rabbins, who, though fabulous enough, yet in such a thing may be credited."
		2. **The four different faces of the cherubim are often taken as symbols of Jesus as represented in each gospel**. In classical church architecture, these four "characters" are repeated often as a motif that signifies both heaven and the four gospels. Most have seen Matthew as the "Lion" gospel, showing Jesus as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Mark is seen as the "Ox" gospel, showing Jesus as a humble servant, a worker. Luke is seen as the "Man" gospel, showing Jesus as the perfect man, the second Adam. John is seen as the "Eagle" gospel, showing Jesus as the man from heaven, the sky. Still, this approach also has other interpretations.
		3. **Do these faces represent the animal kingdom?** Note Ezekiel 1:10, “As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." Perhaps it is safest to say that the four faces are important because they represent all of animate creation, in its utmost excellence. 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. "In *Shemoth Rabba*, sec. 23, fol. 122, 4, Rabbi Abin says: 'There are *four* which have principality in this world: among *intellectual creatures*, man; among *birds*, the eagle; among *cattle*, the ox; and among *wild beasts*, the lion: each of these has a kingdom and a certain magnificence, and they are placed *under the throne of glory*, [Ezekiel 1:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ezekiel+1:10&t1=en_nas). These creatures may be considered the representatives of the whole creation."
		4. **What is a face?** As well, it is significant to see that the Bible associates a *face* with the idea of *person* ([**1 Chronicles 12:8**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Chronicles+12:8&t1=en_nas)**, “**And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains,” [**2 Chronicles 29:6**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Chronicles+29:6&t1=en_nas)**;** [**Isaiah 3:15**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+3:15&t1=en_nas)**,** [**13**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+3:13&t1=en_nas)**:8)**. Here we have singular beings with four faces. Apparently, there are beings that can be more than one person - as our God is One God in three Persons..
		5. **Discuss 2 Samuel 23:20—**lion men of Moab…”And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow.”

**8b, “.. And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”**

1. **Discuss their worship. They do not rest day or night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy."** The cherubim constantly repeat the phrase **holy, holy, holy**. God's **holy** nature and character is declared, and emphasized with a three-time repetition.
	1. **Why “Lord God Almighty**?”  **See Revelation 1:8, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”** The cherubim declared that the **Lord God** is **Almighty**. As in [Revelation 1:8](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:8&t1=en_nas), the ancient Greek word is *pantokrator*, with the idea of "the One who has His hand on everything."

**9And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11Thou 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.**

1. Compare the “historical” implication here. There is also an allusion to a practice in the Roman Empire. The Emperor of Rome ruled over many lesser kings, and these kings were at times commanded to come before the Emperor and lay their crowns down before him in homage. Then he would give them back, as a demonstration that their crowns, their right to rule, their victory, came from him. "This is an allusion to the custom of prostrations in the east, and to the homage of petty kings acknowledging the supremacy of the emperor." (Clarke)
2. Describe the “stephanos” crowns shown here. The **crowns** mentioned in [Revelation 4:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:10&t1=en_nas) are the *stephanos* **crowns**, the crowns of *victory*, not royalty. These are the crowns of achievement that a winning athlete would receive at the ancient Olympian Games. The **twenty-four elders** - representing all the redeemed of God - threw every achievement reward they had back to God, because they knew and proclaimed that He was **worthy . . . to receive glory and honor and power**.
3. **Why is God’s creation important? Examine Colossians 1:16, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”** **For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created**: The twenty-four elders worshipped God because of His creative power and glory. The fact that God is Creator gives Him all right and every claim over everything - even as a potter has all rights and claims over the clay ([Romans 9:21](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+9:21&t1=en_nas)).
	1. See [Revelation 4:11](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:11&t1=en_nas): *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*. The wonderful phrase *and for thy pleasure they are and were created* reminds us that we each exist to give glory and pleasure to God. Until we do that, we don't fulfill our created purpose. Because they represent all the people of God, the worship, the crown, the robes, the heart of these twenty-four elders belongs to us also. "There is a throne in heaven that no one can occupy but you, and there is a crown in heaven that no other head can wear but yours, and there is a part in the eternal song that no voice can ever compass but yours, and there is a glory to God that would be wanting if you did not come to render it, and there is a part of infinite majesty and glory that would never be reflected unless you should be there to reflect it!" (Spurgeon)

## Revelation 5 - The Lion, the Lamb, and the Scroll

**5 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.**

1. **Talk about the scroll.** **Written inside and on the back**: This means that this scroll was unusual. It wasn't common practice to write on both sides of the scroll. This means that whatever information was on this scroll, there was a lot of it - almost more than the scroll can contain. Ancient scrolls were read *horizontally*, not *vertically*. The rolls of the scroll were on the left and the right, and the writing lay in narrow columns about three inches (8 centimeters) wide, written on a substance somewhat like brown paper. The scroll was held in the left hand, and unrolled with the right; as the reading went on, the previously read portion was re-rolled. On such a typical scroll, the Book of Revelation would fill a scroll 15 feet (4.5 meters) long.
	1. **Explain “sealed with seven seals**.” When a roll was finished, it was fastened with strings and the strings were sealed with wax at the knots. This scroll was **sealed with seven seals**; there were seven strings around the scroll, each string sealed with wax. These were not seven writings each separated by a seal; but seven seals all set upon one scroll. All the seals must be opened before the scroll could be read.
	2. **Is this scroll the title deed to the planet earth**? **Use Jeremiah 32:6-15,** “And Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 7Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. 8So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. 9And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. 10And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. 11So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open: 12And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison. 13And I charged Baruch before them, saying, 14Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. 15For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land,” **Psalm 24:1, “The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,”** and **Luke 4:5-8, “And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. 7If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.8And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”** Some think the scroll was the *title deed to planet earth*. This is an attractive idea, especially because the coming time of tribulation will end with Jesus ruling on earth. But it is hard to demonstrate this with certainty. The best connection in this idea seems to be with [Jeremiah 32:6-15](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+32:6-15&t1=en_nas), which describes Jewish title deeds as *sealed*. But there is no doubt that the *earth is the Lord's* ([Psalm 24:1](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+24:1&t1=en_nas)), though the *governments* of this world belong in some sense to Satan ([Luke 4:5-8](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+4:5-8&t1=en_nas)). If God has to get the title deed back, when did God ever "lose" the title deed to planet earth? In fact, God *holds* this scroll - it isn't lost. *But the scroll must be opened, it must be revealed*.
	3. **Is this scroll God’s final will and testament?** **A scroll written**: The best solution is to see the scroll as "God's will, his final settlement of the affairs of the universe." (Barclay) This is based on the idea that customarily, under Roman law, wills were sealed with seven seals, each from a witness to the validity of the will. “Roman law required a will to be sealed seven times as illustrated in the wills left by Augustus and Vespasian for their successors." (Walvoord) The idea here is that God has a book in which the history of the universe is already written. He has *written* the history of the world in advance, He *holds* in His hand the history of the world in advance, and He *initiates* the consummation of all history. *Only God can hold this scroll*.

**2And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? 3And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. 4And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.**

1. **Who is** “**A strong angel**?” We don't know who this angel is. Many have suggested that it is Gabriel, but we don't know. Nonetheless, this angel issued a challenge to all creation: **Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?** This is a challenge no creature can answer because no creature is worthy to open this particular scroll.
2. **Why is John so upset?** **So I wept much**: John **wept** either because a previous promise to see the future may now be denied ([Revelation 4:1](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:1&t1=en_nas)), or more likely, because the consummation of history would now indefinitely postponed. **No one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it**: To look upon the scroll, one must have the right to open the scroll and possess it - and no creature **was found worthy**.

**5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. 6And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. 7And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.**

1. **Comment on the Jewish title, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” and the “Root of David.”**
	1. **The Messianic title Lion of the tribe of Judah comes from** [**Genesis 49:9-10**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+49:9-10&t1=en_nas)**, “**Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?10The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be,” [**Isaiah 31:4**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+31:4&t1=en_nas)**, “For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof,” and** [**Hosea 11:10**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hosea+11:10&t1=en_nas)**, “**They shall walk after the Lord: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.” **Describe.** Trapp says that a Lion is a fitting image of our Messiah, "1. For the Excellency of his strength. 2. for his heroical spirit. 3. For his principality; the lion is the king of beasts. 4. For his vigilance; the lion sleepeth with open eyes."
	2. **The title Root of David comes from** [**Isaiah 11:10**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+11:10&t1=en_nas)**, “**And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious,” **and is repeated in** [**Revelation 22:16**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+22:16&t1=en_nas)**, “**I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”  **Parallel.** Elaborate on the title, “Lamb as it had been slain.” **And I looked, and behold . . . stood a Lamb**: Because of the elder's announcement, John expected to see a Lion, but saw a **Lamb** instead. John even used the specific word for a little lamb; he "Signifies a *little* or *delicate* lamb." (Clarke)
2. **What does** “**seven horns and seven eyes” imply?** Throughout the Scriptures, **eyes** suggest knowledge and wisdom, and **horns** suggest power. This **Lamb** has knowledge, wisdom, and power fulfilled perfectly: **seven horns and seven eyes**.
	1. **Review Zechariah 4:10, “**For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth,” **and 3:9, “**For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” The seven *eyes of the Lord* are a picture of omniscience drawn from the prophet Zechariah ([Zechariah 4:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Zechariah+4:10&t1=en_nas) and 3:9).
3. **Who are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth**: Even though the marks of His sacrifice were evident, the Lamb was not presented as an object of pity. He also bore the marks of omnipotence (**seven horns**) and omniscience (**seven eyes**). What a figure! A slain Lamb, who has the marks of omniscience and omnipotence! See Acts 16:7 and Romans 8:9.
	1. **Review Isaiah 11:2**, “And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”

**8And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. 9And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.**

1. **What is the response? Was it immediate? The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb**: When the Lamb took the scroll, the response was immediate. High-ranking angels and redeemed man joined to worship the Lamb.
	1. **Define harp. Each having a harp**: The **harp** is "Properly, a zither or kind of guitar, played either with the hand, or with a pick." (Alford) Worship in heaven is accompanied by music. As one might expect, this is the passage that started the idea that people in heaven will have harps.
	2. **Talk about the golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints**: With their **golden bowls full of incense**, the elders symbolically presented the prayers of the saints. However, they did not intercede for the saints, functioning as mediators for God's people.
		1. **Review I Timothy 2**:5. We are reminded that *there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus* (1 Timothy 2:5). These elders did not pray for the saints, and this in no way justifies the Roman Catholic practice of praying to the saints, asking them to pray for us. **Golden bowls full of incense**: In this we see how precious the prayers of the saints are to God. He regards them as sweet smelling incense, as if set in precious **golden bowls**.
		2. **Compare with Psalm 141**:2. Connection between prayer and incense is shown in [Psalm 141:2](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+141:2&t1=en_nas): *Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice*. Incense has a pleasing aroma, it ascends to heaven, and it needs *fire* before it is of any use.
	3. **Why “a new song?”** "By a *new song* is either to be understood as an excellent song (for new songs were usually most valued,) or (which pleaseth me best) *new* as to the matter of it; for the servants of God under the Old Testament could not bless God for the actual redemption of man by the blood of Christ, but only rejoice in hope, embracing the promises seen afar off by the eye of faith." (Poole) "It is a new thing that the Son of God should become man. It is a new thing to ascend into the heavens with a body. It is a new thing to give remission of sins to men. It is a new thing for men to be sealed with the Holy Spirit. It is a new thing to receive the priesthood of sacred observance, and to look for a kingdom of unbounded promise."
	4. **What are the seven aspects of “the new song?”**
		1. The song honors the *price* of redemption: **for You were slain.**
		2. The song honors the *worker* of redemption: **have redeemed us.**
		3. The song honors the *destination* of redemption: **have redeemed us to God.**
		4. The song honors the *payment* of redemption: **by Your blood.**
		5. The song honors the *scope* of redemption: **every tribe and tongue and people and nation.**
		6. The song honors the *length* of redemption: **have made us kings and priests to our God.**
		7. The song honors the *result* of redemption: **and we shall reign on the earth**.
	5. **Discuss the historical parallel with this section. You are worthy**: In the days of the Apostle John, Roman Emperors were celebrated upon their arrival with the Latin expression *vere dignus*, which is translated**You are worthy**. Here the true Ruler of the world is honored.
	6. **Review Revelation 4:11**. **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**: In the praise of [Revelation 4:11](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:11&t1=en_nas), the emphasis was on God's work of *creation*. Here, the emphasis is on His work of *redemption*. **Kings and priests to our God**: Believers are **kings** because of their royal birth and their destiny to reign with Jesus. They are **priests** because they need no mediator other than Jesus Himself.

**11And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.**

1. **Why are the elders the only ones singing “the song of the redeemed?”** **I heard the voice of many angels around the throne**: The angels and the elders fell down before the Lamb together ([Revelation 5:8](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+5:8&t1=en_nas)). Yet it seems that only the elders sang the song of the redeemed ([Revelation 5:9-10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+5:9-10&t1=en_nas)), because in no place does the Bible tell us of the redemption of angels. Then, **the voice of many angels around the throne** rose up with the praise of the Great Redeemer. In [Revelation 4:9-10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:9-10&t1=en_nas), the angels prompted the elders into worship. Here, the elders seem to prompt the angels. It is a wonderful cycle in heaven, with the angels and elders encouraging each other to more and more praise.
	1. **Re-visit I Peter 1:12, “**Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into,” **and Ephesian 3:10-12, “**10To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,11According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:12In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.” **Worthy is the Lamb who was slain**: In their song, the angels did not offer praise for their redemption. This is because angels are not (to the best of our knowledge) *subjects* of this redemption but they are careful observers of it, and are therefore able to praise God because of it ([1 Peter 1:12](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Peter+1:12&t1=en_nas) and [Ephesians 3:10](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ephesians+3:10&t1=en_nas)).

**13And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.14And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.**

1. **Discuss who is included in** “**Every creature**.” John couldn't be any more complete in his description. Truly, this is *every creature* - **in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them**. "Now if Jesus Christ were not properly God this would be *idolatry*, as it would be giving to the *creature* what belongs to the *Creator*." (Clarke)
2. **What is “worship?”** **Fell down and worshipped Him**: The ancient Greek word for **worshipped** is literally "to prostrate" or "to lay before another in complete submission." The scene may be that the elders **fell down** to their knees, then laid themselves before **Him who lives forever and ever** as an expression of their total submission and worship. "This is the eastern method of *adoration*: first, the person worshipping fell down on his knees; and then, bowing down touched the earth with his forehead. This latter act was *prostration*." (Clarke) **Forever and ever . . . worshipped Him who lives forever and ever**: The living God reigns eternally. The Caesars come and go, including those who persecute God's people. But the Lord God **lives forever and ever** and is *ever* worthy of our praise.

***And, here are the promises:***

**Revelation 5:9-10, “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”**

**Revelation 1:5-6, “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”**

**The Rapture’s “Big 5!”**

**John 14:1-3**

**I Thess. 4:13-18**

**I Cor. 15:51-52**

**Rev. 3:10**

**Titus 2:11-13**