

The Glorious and Holy Throne of God

An invitation to go to heaven

Revelation 4

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Introduction:

I. Also, as we go through chapters 4 and 5,

A. keep this theme in mind,

B. stated by the psalmist:

**1 The LORD reigns;
Let the peoples tremble!
He dwells between the cherubim;
Let the earth be moved!**

– Psalm 99.1

1. That is what these chapters teach.
2. Therefore, do not think as the world does
 - a) that men control the world, because
 - b) as history shows, they do not.

II. The word “throne” occurs 17 times in these two chapters.

Persuasion:

I. Revelation 4.1 • An Invitation into Heaven

1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

– Revelation 4.1

A. What did John notice?

B. John would be shown things that would take place after the events described in chapters 2 and 3.

- a) Remember what was said in 1.19, when Jesus told John,

**19 “Write the things which you have seen,
and the things which are,
and the things which will take place after this.”**

– Revelation 1.19

- b) John would write of three different times:

- (1) “the things which you have seen,”
 - (a) referring to the revelation of the glorified Jesus
 - (b) that John had just seen in chapter 1;
- (2) “and the things which are,”
 - (a) referring to the matters that Jesus had John write
 - (b) to the churches in chapters 2 and 3;
- (3) “and the things which will take place after this,”
 - (a) referring to the matters that John would yet write
 - (b) from here to the end of the Book of Revelation.

II. Revelation 4.2 • A Throne

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

– Revelation 4.2

A. Jesus had just spoken to the Laodicean church (3.21)

1. of sitting down with His Father on His throne.
2. Then John saw the throne for himself!

B. What did John see?

III. Revelation 4.3 • The One on the Throne

3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance;

and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

– Revelation 4.3

- A. Although the One on the throne was a being,
 - 1. John did not use any human-like qualities to picture this being.
 - 2. He used things, but spectacular things!
- B. The appearance of the One sitting on the throne looked like a jasper stone and a sardius stone.
 - 1. He was beautiful and brilliant.
 - 2. Rather than blinding light, as we would expect, John saw color.
- C. Then John saw a rainbow around this One on the throne, but the rainbow was colored like an emerald, so that it had shades of green colors to it.
- D. What John pictured for us was the radiance or glory of God.
- E. For comparison, notice this part of Ezekiel's vision:

26 And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. 27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. 28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

– Ezekiel 1.26–28

IV. Revelation 4.4–6 • More Around the Throne

4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like

crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

– Revelation 4.4–6

A. John saw 24 more thrones and on those thrones he saw 24 elders.

1. In Revelation 21,

- a) the twelve tribes of Israel and
- b) the twelve apostles of Christ
- c) are brought together.

(1) Verse 12 The twelve tribes are written on the gates of heaven.

(2) Verse 14 The twelve apostles are written on the foundations of heaven.

(3) In Matthew 19.28, Jesus told the apostles that they would sit on thrones, and look who they are judging,

28 So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

– Matthew 19.28

2. Therefore, John saw himself, whether he realized it, on one of those thrones.

3. Heaven is the place where the people of both Testaments are together.

B. The elders were wearing white robes is further explained in Revelation 7:

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” 14 And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

– **Revelation 7.13–14**

- C. Why were the elders wearing crowns?
- D. What activity around the throne did John notice?
 - 1. Lightnings proceeded from the throne: spectacular sights.
 - 2. Thunderings proceeded from the throne: powerful sounds.
 - 3. Voices proceeded from the throne: distinct purposes to the lightnings and thunderings.
 - 4. Remember God on Sinai!
- E. What are the seven lamps of fire?
- F. Did you see what was before the throne?
 - 1. It was a sea of glass that looked like crystal.
- G. With what were the living creatures filled?
- H. To see similar pictures of the living creatures read Ezekiel 1 and 10.

V. Revelation 4.7–8 • More on These Creatures

7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

**“Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!”**

– **Revelation 4.7–8**

- A. The four living creatures looked like earth creatures.
 - 1. One was like a lion: fierce.
 - 2. One was like a calf: young and strong.
 - 3. One had a face like a man: intelligent.

4. One was like a flying eagle: heavenly.
 - a) There are various interpretations of what they represented.
 - b) A prominent idea is that they represent the gospels.
- B. Compare the wings with the wings of the seraphim in Isaiah 6.1–4.
- C. The creatures were full of eyes around and within.
- D. What is their never-ending job?
 1. They announce the holiness of God.
 2. The four living creatures are heralding the holiness of God, and all of heaven is worshiping Him.
- E. Consider the magnificent and holy declaration.
 1. They make a triple declaration of the holiness of God.
 2. They make a triple declaration of His identity, He is Lord God Almighty.
 3. They make a triple declaration of His eternal nature:
 - a) He was,
 - b) He is,
 - c) He is to come.

VI. Revelation 4.9–11 • They Worship God

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

**11 “You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created.”**

– Revelation 4.9–11

- A. When the four living creatures broadcast the holy and eternal nature of God another thing happened in heaven.

- a) John called the statement of the four living creatures as giving God glory and honor and thanks, using a triple pattern to point out their three-part triple declaration!
 - b) This is the activity of heaven, glorifying, honoring, and thanking God.
2. In verse 9, John stated that God lives forever and ever and
- a) in verse 10, he said again that God lives forever and ever.
 - b) Why is this being emphasized?
- B. What happened when the four living creatures glorified God?
1. The 24 elders fell down before the eternal One who sits on the throne and worshiped Him.
 2. As a further act of worship they cast their golden crowns before the throne, demonstrating that the authority they have comes from Him and they submit to Him without question.
- C. In total agreement with the four living creatures, the 24 elders praise the worthiness of God.
1. He is worthy to receive
 - a) glory and
 - b) honor and
 - c) power.
 2. He is worthy because
 - a) He created all things and
 - b) without Him there was nothing created.
 3. He is worthy because
 - a) by His will
 - b) all things exist and
 - c) were created.

Exhortation:

- I. **Does the world have us outgunned, outnumbered, and out-financed?**

- A. Remember the One who is gloriously seated on the throne of heaven, looking over all the affairs of the church and of the world.

II. Regardless of what the world does,

37 ...we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

– Romans 8.37

- A. No matter what the world does, no matter how powerful the world gets, and no matter how much the world fights against God, we cannot lose.

III. Remember First John 4.4.

**4 You are of God, little children,
and have overcome them,
because He who is in you is greater
than he who is in the world.**

– 1John 4.4

IV. Are you on the winning side?