



Empowering People to Change the World

Heaven: God's Throne Room

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Heaven-God's Throne Room

We now begin the 3rd division of the book...

- Outline of the book of Revelation is 1:19.
- This gives us the 3rd division of the book of Revelation:
 - Section 1: The things which you have seen...the vision of Christ in chapter 1.
 - Section 2: The things which are...chapters 2 and 3...which we have just finishing studying, the 7 churches.
 - Section 3: The things which will take place...chapters 4-22.

This is the only place in all of the Bible where heaven is described in detail.

- How many of us have asked “What is heaven like?” We have a picture of heaven here.
- Paul once briefly speaks of being taken up into, what he called “the third heaven...paradise,” (1 Cor. 12) but he says it was to wonderful to describe.
- John is seeing what is really happening in heaven.
- The book of Revelation is about two realities: the seen and the unseen, the heavenly and earthly.
- On this earth there is a law of diminishing returns...we tend to set our sights on the earthly and not the heavenly.
 - We need bigger houses, nicer cars, more in style clothes, but guess what, it's all fading.

- And the Mercedes...we tell the kids don't put your McDonald's cups in there and keep your grubby hands off of this or that and then we drive into the restaurant and someone bashes it in...and we have to start acting Christian!
- Jesus is taking us to heaven, where there are no law of diminishing returns.
- We will never tire of worshipping Him, never tire of serving Him.

Read Revelation 4:1-11.

- For the next three weeks we will be looking at what heaven is about and how that effects our life on earth.
- Heaven is a reality! Heaven is not a dream. Heaven is not an Iowa baseball diamond. John experienced a true reality.
- It is the "throne" that gets John's attention...the first thing is the throne.
- 15x in the New King James, "throne" is mentioned in this chapter alone.

Revelation 4:1

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."

- Verse 1 Begins with "After these things" and ends with "after this."
- Both phrase are the same in the Greek, *meta tauta*.
 - "After these things" *meta tauta* after the church age, when we are caught up into heaven to be with the Lord.
 - Some have used this phraseology to say this is speaking of the rapture of the church, and they have come to that conclusion based on the placing of John experiencing heaven before the great tribulation period.

- The word *ecclesia*, used for “church” is used 19x in the first three chapters of Revelation, but never used again in the book until she appears as the Bride of Christ in chapter 19 in heaven.
- So from chapter 4-18 the “church” is not mentioned.
- But for me, as a Bible student, I don’t see it. I do believe in the rapture and I do believe we will be spared from much of the Great Tribulation period, but I can’t base it on this verse.
- John Walvoord, the preeminent theologian and a dispensational scholar, former President of Dallas Theological Seminary writes in his commentary on Revelation, “It is clear from the context that this is not an explicit reference to the rapture of the church.” *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, page 103.
- **“Pray we don’t go through the great tribulation, but prepare as if we will.”**

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.”

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

- An open invitation to all of us!
- When we think of heaven, we will think about seeing our relatives, but it will be the throne that will be the center.
- Imagine no Congress, no Cabinet, no Senate in session in heaven!
- One Throne, One person on the throne.
- Now it is interesting: 15x “throne” is used in this chapter...45x in the book of Revelation.
- **This is the point! This is the central point of the book of Revelation.**

- The throne represents Who is in control, Who has true sovereignty, Who has ultimate authority.
 - This is the control room of the universe.
 - But Satan's throne is on the earth...Pergamos,,,"the throne of Satan."
 - Remember we have been looking at 7 churches in Asia Minor, and 5 of the 7 are not doing well...better than 70% of the churches less than 60 years after Jesus was on the earth are not walking closely with the Lord anymore, and yet I want you to note how Jesus is doing in heaven!
- **In the midst of our 21st century life, we have:**
 - Abortion around the world killing millions.
 - A war with ISIS killing thousands.
 - Terrorists killing hundreds.
 - New epidemics breaking out annually.
 - These are only birth pangs for the coming of the Lord!
 - Guess what? Right here is the true reality—God the Father on the throne is what we need to also focus on.
 - Robert Browning once said, "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world."
 - **Jesus is on the throne; He is seated on the throne in the center of heaven.**
 - Jesus is not pacing back and forth worried about the world.
 - Jesus is not having a committee meeting to figure out what to do next.
 - Praise God there is no Senate or Congress in heaven.

- Listen: God's not up for election every 4 years!!
- **This is the true reality...the true picture...of a sovereign God who is in control and His plans are being carried out.**
- God reigns! God is reigning! God is in control!
- To the extent that we line ourselves up with heaven, is the extent that we experience His power and joy in our lives.
- The past two weeks I've been overjoyed, enraptured by, so excited about Mark 12, "the first and greatest commandment" the greatest man who ever lived has given us the greatest commandment to live the greatest life! I'm speaking tomorrow at Chapel Hills Church on this statement. THAT's what we should be excited about.
 - Loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength!
 - That God I'm talking about is Ruling over the universe.
 - He's bringing this world to a conclusion.
 - This earth is Satan's throne room; and heaven is God's throne room and He's in control.
- How can you read the paper, how can you watch the news without the Bible? This is our comfort and peace in times of trouble.
- Don't miss this: there is an open door! John is invited in; we are invited in. notice that God says "come up here."
 - We are invited to experience heaven every time we worship
 - Worship is all about proclaiming that God is sovereign
 - We are about to see a majestic, all knowing, all loving God on His throne
 - That's worship. We are invited up.

Verse 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.

- Jasper...Chapter 21 we read that it is clear as chrysal...This is not the opaque stone we are familiar with, but probably a diamond.

- Sardius stone is blood red.
- Rainbow all the way around the throne.
- This throne is brilliant...a blood red shining out.
 - At Jesus' transfiguration He shines like the sun and his garments are white as snow, and His appearance like lightening.
 - This beautiful powerful light is like that...uninhibited by the earth, perfect.
 - The red representing redemption.
 - The rainbow representing His faithfulness.
 - **God's Redemptive Faithfulness.**
 - We need to hear this. God is redemptive faithfulness to you. No matter what you've done, God is YOUR redemption and He will not fail you. He is here! Worship Him. This is not light stuff. This is heavy. Contend for God's redemptive faithfulness in your life
 - You may have gone through a divorce.
 - You may have been betrayed by people you trusted.
 - God will be your REDEMPTIVE FAITHFULNESS.

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.

- This speaks of the perfection of God...the perfection of the Word of God.
- This will be the final revelation of the Canon of Scripture, the Rule of Law for the believer.
- Revelation, this vision, will complete the Canon, the final of 66 books Old and New Testament.

- Who are these elders?
 - These are not angels or heavenly creatures, they are wearing white robes with crowns of gold.
 - The 24 elders represent the 12 tribes of Israel and the OT and the 12 apostles, symbolizing the NT, the New dispensation...coming together as one, unity of the Bible.
 - The 24 elders are ruling over heaven...they also represent all of the redeemed both in OT times and NT...the family of God.
 - I believe that they are representing the church for all time, the redeemed ones.
 - These are not angels, the angels are arrayed around the throne.
- The lightening and thunder is a picture of God's coming righteousness upon the earth.
 - Revelation 8:5 - Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. NKJV
 - Revelation 11:19 - Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.
 - Revelation 16:18 - And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.
 - God's judgment is coming soon...there are lightnings and thunderings in heaven, but soon they will be upon the earth.
 - I can still remember the fear I had when thunder and lightning hit when I was at Grandmothers big house in South Carolina. I loved those moments—fear and excitement all mixed together.

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.*

- “Before the throne there was a sea of glass.”
- These are the redeemed saints who have gone before us. These are the martyred saints from Africa and Asia and the Middle East who have given their lives for their faith. These are your relatives who have died who love the Lord.
- Let’s compare scripture with scripture...they represent the saints...
- Revelation 15:2 - And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. NKJV
- So, if you are a pre-tribulation rapture believer, as I am, this sea of glass are the raptured saints taken up to heaven just before the Tribulation begins.

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!”**

- What a strange scene...not like anything on earth.
- These are heavenly beings, but not animals.
- If we compare Ezekiel chapter 1 and 10, we can identify these beings as “cherubim” or an exalted order of angels. In his vision each cherubim had all of these qualities, each one had all of the four qualities.

- They are a kind of “heavenly war machine” about to be unleashed upon the earth.
 - Angels will be sent out, beginning in chapter 6, to judge the earth.
 - But their supreme responsibility is to hover over and worship God.
- They are angels that are constantly hovering over the throne, prepared to be sent out by God to the four corners of the earth.
 - The Lion represents power and majesty.
 - The Calf or ox represents strength to serve.
 - The Face of a Man symbolizes God’s highest creation, man and his intelligence.
 - The Eagle represents sovereignty and supremacy.
- They do not rest day or night...constantly on the move, worshipping, and seeing all that is happening.

**And they do not rest day or night, saying:
 “Holy, holy, holy,
 Lord God Almighty,
 Who was and is and is to come!”**

- Most manuscripts actually write “holy” nine times!
- We are entering an escalating heavenly worship service: This is the most awesome worship service ever known!
- Are you going there? Is heaven your destiny? Are you sure?
- If you are not, make sure now!
 - The Bible says (Hebrews 9:27) - And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, NKJV
 - Jesus says (John 3:15-16) - That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. NKJV

- Jesus says (John 17:3) - And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
NKJV