

"Heaven is opened"

Part 2

Revelation 4:1-11

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of Revelation we stepped into Revelation 4 and it was in this chapter where we were able to look into the Throne Room of Heaven. This chapter takes us into the 3<sup>rd</sup> section of the book of Revelation.

**Revelation 1:19**

*<sup>19</sup> Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;*

Here in verse 19 we can see the book can be divided into 3 sections:

**I. The things which thou hast seen.**

**Revelation 1:10-20**

**II. The things which are.**

**Revelation 2:1-3:22 (The letters to the 7 churches)**

**III. The things which shall be hereafter.**

**Revelation 4:1-22:21**

Now as John wrote this chapter we are able to see that his focus fell upon the Throne of God the Father.

**Notice Revelation 4:1-2**

John refers to the Throne of God 12 times within this chapter and in chapter 5 he refers to it another 5 times. There were many things in heaven for John to see but it was the Throne of God which caught his attention. But it was not just the Throne; he also spoke of the One sitting upon the Throne.

**Notice Revelation 4:3**

John tells us here that He who sat upon the Throne was like unto 2 stones.

1. **The Jasper Stone**
2. **The Sardius Stone**

Both of these stones have a symbolic meaning in the setting before us. The jasper stone is clear like a diamond. This stone speaks of the holiness and the righteousness of God. This is so significant in the setting because in chapter 6 we are going to see the judgments poured out on the world. There will be people who ask, "WHY?" The reason is seen in the symbolic meaning of the stone. God is holy and He is righteous and so he must judge sin.

The Sardius stone was the color of a ruby so it was red. This stone speaks of the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed for the world. So when people say, "The judgments are not fair" the Sardius stone reminds everyone that God provided a way of salvation for the entire world.

John also saw the rainbow around the Throne and it was a full circle. This full circle speaks of perfection. The rainbow speaks of peace and calm after the storm. For you and me the rainbow means the storm is over and the peace and the calm of heaven will be perfect. The emerald/green color speaks of the newness of the peace. In other words it will never go away. For all eternity we will have a fresh peace and calm within our souls.

### I. The Inhabitants

Now as we move on in this chapter John will describe those who occupied heaven besides God the Father.

Notice Revelation 4:4

Now John tells us that around the Throne there were 24 seats which are actually thrones. They are lesser thrones than THE THRONE of God. Then on the 24 thrones there were 24 elders.

Now the question here is, "Who are the 24 elders?"

I believe we can answer that question but in order to do so we need to search the Scriptures. Some say they are angels, some say they are Old Testament saints, some say they are a special group who sits in judgment with God and others say they represent all the saved.

Let me take you back to the verse again.

Notice Revelation 4:4 again.

I need to draw your attention to the crowns which they are wearing to begin with. These crowns are "*stephanos*" crowns which mean they are crowns given as rewards for service.

**Notice Revelation 5:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *And 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 odours, which are the prayers of saints.*

<sup>9</sup> *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;*

Here we see that the 24 elders were redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. This tells us that the 24 elders are not angels but they are people who while on the earth were saved by the blood of the Lamb.

So we have narrowed down the possibilities and we know they are either Old Testament saints or they are New Testament saints which would be the church.

Now let me get you back to the crowns. The crowns are rewards so whoever these people are they have already received their rewards which mean they have received their glorified bodies. Let me show you 2 verses from the book of Daniel.

**Daniel 12:1-2**

*And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*

<sup>2</sup> *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

Daniel is looking ahead and he is speaking about the Tribulation and 2 different resurrections. Both of these resurrections are AFTER the TRIBULATION. The first one is the Old Testament saints and the second one is the unsaved of the entire world. But the point is they are both AFTER the tribulation.

Now let us get back to Revelation 4. These people around the Throne on the lesser thrones already have been resurrected and have been given their rewards. This is BEFORE the TRIBULATION so this must be the CHURCH.

Notice Revelation 4:4

These 24 elders are clothed in white raiment as well as crowned. Let me remind you of what Jesus said concerning the church.

### **Revelation 2:10**

*<sup>10</sup> 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.*

There is the promise of the crown.

### **Revelation 3:5**

*<sup>5</sup> 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.*

Here is the promise of the white raiment.

So these 24 elders are most likely the glorified church which is us who know Jesus Christ.

### **Notice Revelation 4:5**

Here we see that besides the 24 elders were the 7 Spirits of God. This does not mean that there are 7 different Spirits. The number 7 speaks of perfection or completion so the 7 Spirits represent the Spirit of God in His perfection. He is represented by 7 lamps of fire burning before the Throne. These are associated with the thundering's and the lightning's and it all points to the judgment which is about to come from this Throne in heaven.

Fire and burning speak of judgment in the Word of God.

### **Malachi 4:1**

*For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.*

**There is also encouragement here for the believer.**

On the earth there was a Tabernacle and it was built after the one which existed in heaven. So everything in the Tabernacle in the wilderness was a picture of that which is in heaven. Now in the Tabernacle in the wilderness there was a lampstand and it there were 7 burning candles. The lampstand provided light for the priest when he came into the Holy Place. It had to be maintained by the priest. He added oil and he trimmed the wick.

Here in heaven there are 7 burning lamps in the true Tabernacle. This light never goes out and it never needs someone to maintain it. It comes from the Holy Spirit.

### **What does this mean to me?**

When I get to heaven there will never again be any darkness in my life. When you and I get to heaven we will step into Perfect Light. This also means that our fellowship with our God will never ever be broken. In this life our fellowship is broken when we sin.

#### **1 John 1:6-9**

*<sup>6</sup> If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*

*<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

*<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

*<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

In heaven our fellowship will be perfect. Let me show you something else.

#### **Notice Revelation 4:6a**

The next thing John sees is a sea of glass like unto crystal. Now let me go back to the earthly Tabernacle. There was in the earthly Tabernacle a laver. It was a brass bowl made from something very interesting.

**Exodus 30:18**

<sup>18</sup> Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein.

**Exodus 38:8**

<sup>8</sup> And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The priest would wash his hands in this laver before he could enter the presence of God in the Tabernacle. It was made from the mirrors of the women.

**Why mirrors?**

**The laver speaks of confession and self-examination.** Before we can have fellowship with the Lord today we must confess our sins to and then He cleanses us permitting us to enjoy fellowship with Him.

**1 John 1:9**

<sup>9</sup> *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**Notice Revelation 4:6a again.**

Now there is no laver mentioned in heavens Tabernacle but there is a sea of glass. This tells me the water in the sea is still. The water in the laver was never still because the priest was constantly washing.

Now listen to this. In heaven we will have perfect fellowship and there will never again be the need to confess our sins because we will never sin again. In our glorified bodies we will be sinless. We will have perfect light and perfect fellowship with our Lord for all of eternity.

**Notice Revelation 4:6-7**

Next John pointed to 4 beasts or "LIVING CREATURES". These are 4 angels which are around the Throne. Now there are many more but these 4 stand out to John.

In verse 7 we see that each has a different face.

1. Lion
2. Calf
3. Man
4. Flying Eagle

What does this mean?

These are the 4 ways in which Jesus is pictured in each of the Gospels.

1. King (Matthew)
2. Servant (Mark)
3. Man (Luke)
4. Eagle (John)

These 4 angels reflect our Savior for they gaze on Him constantly.

**Conclusion:**

The more time we spend with Christ and the more we look upon our Him the more we manifest Him in our lives. This is by the way the will of God for our lives.

**Romans 8:28-29**

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

*<sup>29</sup> For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*