

The Book of Revelation

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THE THRONE ROOM SCENE IN HEAVEN

Revelation 4:1-11

A Glimpse into the Throne Room of God

- **An Open Door**

How is it there is an open door in heaven? Christ is that door into the presence of and worship of God. John is caught up into heaven and given the next vision. The voice like a trumpet is that of Christ's (Rev. 1:10).

- **In the Spirit**

As shown earlier, this refers to a vision being revealed to a prophet.

The One who sits on the Throne

- **God is Sovereign**

Let us never forget the throne. It appears in almost every verse in this chapter. It speaks of God's sovereignty. The throne of God is extremely prominent throughout John's prophecy, being explicitly mentioned in every chapter except chapters 2, 9, 10, 15, 17, and 18.

Sometimes we speak and act as if the control of events and the destiny of the world rested in the hands of men instead of in the hands of God. In the midst of trial and tribulation, may our gaze be towards the One who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Sometimes we are easily frustrated; the book of Revelation declares to us, "Don't be frustrated. God is on His throne." The throne of God is the very center of the universe!

- **God is Glorious**

When God commissions His prophets, He brings them into His heavenly and holy place to see His glory and receive His Word.

The imagery that is used to describe God, the Father, who sits on the throne is not easy to explain. Portraying the glory of God was the objective, not a detailed description of the Father's appearance. God is incomprehensible. We will continue to learn about God for all of eternity. There are no clear features which can be turned into a forbidden image – only color and texture. The imagery in this passage is not new. We see similar descriptions in the following passages:

- **Isaiah 6**

In the year that the earthly king died, Isaiah saw the real eternal King on His everlasting throne! This throne, and the One upon it, is so immense that the train of His robe fills the temple. His voice declares His power. The angelic beings are still crying out "holy" in the book of Revelation. They are not bored in the presence of the Most Glorious One!

- **Daniel 7**

Daniel has a vision of 4 beasts, and in the midst of this, he sees a throne room scene (v. 9-14). The four beasts represent the modern history of the world. They are the kingdoms of men. At the end God will bring judgment. There is nowhere to hide from the God who orders everything. The kingdoms of men are not getting away with anything. This is not a fearful thing for the believer. This is the God who is looking after you, and loves you as a Father. You can relax because He is working all things together for your good.

➤ Ezek. 1-2ff

Ezekiel was deported to Babylon from Judah by the Babylonians before they destroyed Jerusalem. While Ezekiel was in Babylon, he receives a vision regarding what is going to happen to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is under the impression that God is on their side. They feel they are invincible because the temple is still standing. However, God is about to act and bring judgment on Jerusalem and Israel. In Revelation we have a similar picture except this time it is worldwide judgment. Nothing ever happens that is not ushered forth from the throne.

➤ Ezek. 10

Here we have another vision that includes cherubim (living creatures), coals of fire, and judgment.

• **The Seven Spirits of God and the Sea of Glass**

In light of earlier references, it would seem clear that the seven Spirits is symbolizing the fullness of the Spirit's presence with the Father. The heavenly sea where things are tranquil stands in contrast to the chaos of the sea on earth, from which the satanic beast emerges to wage war against the saints (Rev. 13:1). The earthly sea, source and symbol of satanic chaos, is destined for destruction with the passing of the first heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1).

God's Courtiers

• **Four Living Creatures**

God has glorious angels to serve Him. These creatures appear to be an exalted order of angelic beings, as indicated by their special proximity to the throne of God. They have something to do with the judicial authority of the throne. Their participation in the administration of divine justice is evident in the book (i.e. Rev. 6:1,3,5,7; 15:7). The analogy of these angelic beings to the seraphim of Isa. 6:1-3 and the cherubim of Ezek. 10: 2,14,20) is apparent. The reference to the lion, ox, man, and eagle could refer to all creatures, or perhaps a reflection of Christ – and thus a reflection of the glory of the Lord.

• **Twenty-four Elders**

The twenty-four elders may represent all redeemed humanity (see Rev. 20:12,14) fulfilling their purpose in praising God; or they may be angelic beings that represent the redeemed. Either way they are connected to the church of Jesus Christ – the overcomers. The crowns may be symbolic of their overcoming (see Rev. 2:10; 3:5,11; 20:4). They reign with Christ. Eternal life and reigning are only for those who persevere and endure (Matt. 24:13; James 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; 1 Cor. 9:24-25).

Worship of the One who sits on the Throne

• **Expanding Praise**

The choir that glorifies the One sitting on the throne and the Lamb expands with each doxology.

1. The four living creatures extol God's holiness, omnipotence, and eternity (4:8). God is glorified, honored and thanked just for being who He is (4:9).
2. The twenty-four elders praise God as the only one worthy of all glory (4:10). He created and sustains all things – including the salvation of the saints, which is picked up in ch. 5. (1 Cor. 4:7)
3. The myriads in chapter 5.