

Revelation Chapter 4 Bible Study Notes

*“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power,
For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.”*

Revelation 4:11

v.1-2

“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.’ Immediately I was in the spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.”

Here the Apostle John sees in vision a tremendous sight as he beholds and sees the Father sitting upon His throne. A door in the Heavenly Sanctuary is opened and John hears the voice of Jesus saying to him, *“Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”*

v.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.”

The appearance of God upon His throne was so glorious and majestic, that the only recognisable thing that John could compare Him to was the appearance of precious gems glistening in their beauty.

The Prophet Isaiah tells us in his experience that the length of God’s fine linen robe fills the entire Heavenly Temple, *“I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.”*

Isaiah 6:1

In addition, Ezekiel tells us in **Ezekiel 1:26-28**, that a glorious fire surrounds the throne of God and both he (Ezekiel) & the Apostle John see a magnificent rainbow also surrounding God’s throne.

Also, notice what the Prophet Daniel tells us about the appearance of God the Father in which he sees in his vision while he was still in Babylon, *“I watched till thrones were put in place and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire.”*

By comparing Scripture with Scripture, we can get a clearer picture of the Throne of God as all of the references are consistent with one another.

v.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.”

Here John sees in vision twenty-four other thrones surrounding the throne of God. Upon these twenty-four thrones are twenty-four elders who are wearing white robes made of linen, representing their righteousness, which has been imputed unto them by Jesus.

“Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness...” Psalm 132:9

“I put on righteousness, and it clothed me...” Job 29:14

“So, you shall speak to all who are gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe...” Exodus 28:3-4

Notice in the above that the priests are to be clothed in robes, which in all cases represent righteousness. This same righteousness shall clothe the faithful saints who will receive their reward at the last day.

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” Revelation 19:7-8

We, God’s faithful Church are also to be priests in Heaven and as such we will be clothed as the priests in the days of Ancient Israel were.

“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood...” 1st Peter 2:5

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1st Peter 2:9

“...to Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:5-6

Let us not forget that the twenty-four elders are also wearing crowns of gold, symbolic of their victory and triumph. The word for ‘crown’ used here in the passage comes from the Greek Word, ‘*stephanos*’, representing something which is given as a prize, i.e., a badge of victory. Notice the below Scriptures where the same Greek word ‘*stephanos*’ is used.

“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” James 1:12

“...be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Revelation 2:10

“Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown...” Revelation 14:14

v.5

“And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thundering, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

In Scripture, whenever there is to be a great announcement from God, judgement or a great event to take place, there is always seen lightning, thundering and a voice.

See: **Exodus 19:16, Revelation 8:5, Revelation 11:19, Revelation 16:18.**

In addition, this verse also takes us back to the earthly sanctuary and it shows us the parallel between the earthly and Heavenly Sanctuaries.

From studying the sanctuary, in the Books of Exodus & Leviticus, we know that the ‘seven lamps of fire’ or ‘seven branch candle stick’ was found in the Holy Place of the earthly sanctuary. We also know that according to the Book of **Hebrews 8:1-5** and **9:24**, the earthly sanctuary built first by Moses and then after by Solomon was a copy of the true Sanctuary in Heaven, ‘*not built by human hands.*’ Based on this Bible truth, we can see that this vision which the Apostle John received took place in the Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary.

v.6-8

“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. 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. 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!”

John sees a ‘*sea of glass*, clear as crystal & mingled with fire, **Chapter 15:2**. This is the same sea of glass which the redeemed from the earth who were alive at the Second Coming of Christ, stand upon. They had gained the victory over the beast and its image and its mark. See what Ezekiel says about this ‘*sea of glass*’ in **Ezekiel 1:22**.

Surrounding the throne of God are four living creatures full of wisdom & understanding, **Ephesians 1:18**, represented by the eyes which cover it front and back. These four creatures had four different appearances (a Man, a Calf, a Lion & an Eagle), and these four appearances are representative of the four different characteristics of Christ Jesus.

He is the Son of Man, descended from the line of David, He is meek as a calf is, yet He is also the lion of the tribe of Judah & as an Eagle is able to bear its young upon its back as it soars high in the sky, so is Jesus able to bear our burdens, should we surrender them fully to Him.

We should also compare this with **Ezekiel 1:10, 10:14** as he also has a bit to say on the four living creatures.

The four living creatures have the appearance of fire and lightning round about them as described by Ezekiel and they continuously give glory to God, ceasing not day or night. From their mouths they utter, ***“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!”***

v.9-11

“Whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 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:

“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things and by Your will they exist and were created.”

Observe the humility of the twenty-four elders; they fall prostrate to their knees in reverence, casting their golden crowns to the ground before the throne and give glory and honour and praise to the Creator. Says the elders, **“You created all things and by Your will they exist and were created.”** Compare this scene to the irreverence we see in the Church today; the clapping and shouting and irreverent behaviour of professed Christians.

Says Habakkuk, **“But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”**

Habakkuk 2:20

We are to take an example from the above Scriptures and exhibit reverence when we come before the presence of the Lord, not engaging in confusing & irreverent forms of worship. **“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” 1st Corinthians 14:22**

This proclamation of God being the Creator by the twenty-four elders, takes us back to the beginning, to the first week, where God created the heavens and the earth and all that is within them in six days and rested on the seventh. He saw that all of His work of creation was very good, and He thus sanctified it and made the Sabbath Day Holy, to be observed by all mankind, for He gave His Sabbath as ‘a sign’ between us, His people, and Him throughout all generations.

The same God who was the Creator in the first book of the Bible, is the same God who is proclaimed as the Creator in the last book of the Bible, for He ‘is the same yesterday, today and forevermore’ & He ‘changes not.’

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

Genesis 2:2-3