

REVELATION: CHAPTER 4

All that is mentioned thus far (*including the letters to the seven churches*), written to prepare the church for the (*then*) coming tribulation, served as a "cover letter" for the heavenly vision that is about to begin.

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Rev 4:1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in Heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

- After this- Things written up to this point, John is here revealing his vision of the throne in Heaven.

- open door- Access to the heavenly vision. Paul saw this: 2 Cor 12:1-2.

- The voice- (1:10) as a trumpet- either a warning or attention being necessary: Exo 19:16; 20:18.

John is invited to see the events that would come to pass "soon" according to the things... hereafter (1:1, 19).

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Rev 4:2 And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and One sat on the throne.

- in the Spirit- Thayer- "to come to be in the Spirit, under the power of the Spirit, i.e., in a state of inspiration or ecstasy".

- throne- Authority; set in Heaven... the headquarters for God's forces against Satan and his forces. The One occupying the throne- God! Read Psa 11:4; Isa 6:1-4; Eze 1:26-28; 10:1; Dan 7:9-14.

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Rev 4:3 And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

- Read Eze 1:26-28. (Isa 6:1-3)

- John described the same vision that Ezekiel saw. Actual descriptions are avoided. Such would lead to idolatry.

- jasper- Webster: an opaque variety of colored quartz.

- sardine- blood red. Along with the jasper, these were used to describe the appearance (*splendor*) of the One sitting on the throne.

- rainbow- indicating a covenant, thus mercy: Gen 9:13.

- emerald- (*green*) dominate color describing the appearance of the rainbow as that of a precious stone.
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Rev 4:4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

- elders- Gk.4245-πρεσβύτερος-presbuteros-pres-boo'-ter-os

Comparative of πρεσβυς presbus (*elderly*); *older*; as noun, a *senior*; specifically an Israelite *Sanhedrist* (also figuratively, **member of the celestial council**) or Christian “presbyter”: - elder (-est), old. (*Emp. added*)

Isa 24:21 On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in Heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. 22 They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. 23

Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the LORD of hosts **reigns** on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and His glory **will be before His elders**. (*Emp. added*) (ESV)

- throne- authority.
- white raiment- in the presence of God. (*see also 18:1; 19:8*)
- crowns- Gk.4735-στέφανος-stephanos-*stef'-an-os* (to twine or wreath);

These were adorned with honorary wreaths which were given to the victors.

- gold- This is that which is bought from God (*see notes on 3:18*) as opposed to that of...

1Pe 1:18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with **perishable things** such as silver or gold, (*Emp. added*) (ESV)

- twenty-four- complete, priestly. Although these are not actually the twelve patriarchs or the twelve apostles, they represent the redeemed from both Covenants (*Rom 2:12-16*). How could these 24 represent the praise system of the O.T. (*as set up by David- 1 Chr 25*) since that O.T. system became "obsolete" (*Heb 8:13; 13:15*)? See notes on 21:12-13.

"These kings represent the patriarchs of Israel and the apostles of the Lamb - the Old and New Testaments".

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- round about the throne- (*5:11*) God is surrounded by unimaginable power and glory along with the

victorious twenty-four (*number of completeness and perfection*) elders representing the patriarchs of the O.T. along with the apostles of the New.

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Rev 4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

- Displaying God's awesomeness, majesty and power: Exo 19:16-19.

- Unlike the lampstands (*Gk.3087*) of 1:12 here we have torches (*Gk.29859*).

The seven lamps in the Old Testament Holy Place gave light to the priests in order for them to perform their priestly duties. That light represents the word of God (*Ps 119:105*) that aids the priests (*Christians*) of the New Testament Holy Place (*the church*) by giving "light" (*knowledge*) for her to perform her priestly duties (*worship, evangelism, benevolence, "a sacrifice of praise to God"- Heb 13:15*): Php 2:14-16.

Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but **now** *are ye light in the Lord*: walk (*Gk.4043-live*) as **children of light**: (*Emp. added*)

- seven- complete! Here, the seven torches represent Holy Spirit, the One Who delivered the word of God (*2:11*). See also 5:6; Jn 16:13-15; 2 Pet 1:20-21.

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Rev 4:6 And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

- sea of glass- separation. It represents the following...

To **Noah** the water separated the ark from the sin-filled world below it.

1Pe 3:20 ... when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely (*separated*) through water. (ESV)

To the **Israelite** the Red Sea separated them from the Egyptians thus saving them. (*Read Exo 14:23-31.*)

- The Jordan separated the Israelite from entering the Promised Land: Jos 2:24; 3:17; 22:4.

- The priest's cleansing in the laver was necessary which separated them from entering the tabernacle: Exo 30:17-21; 40:30-32; Lev 16:4; Num 8:13-15, 20-22; 2 Chr 4:2-6. (*See notes on Mat 3.*)

- The sea here (*as in 15:2, 3*) represents Paradise.

Luk 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.

- This (*sea of glass*) is the spiritual place (*paradise in the Hadean realm*) where the faithful wait in anticipation of the resurrection- 15:2; Phil 1:23-24; 2 Pet 3:13. (*Lk 16:19-31 concerns "Abraham's bosom". Jesus was speaking to the Jews then who had such an affinity toward Abraham as being his seed but held such disdain for their brethren who were poor [Deu 15:7]. Knowing Lazarus was with Abraham in the realm of Paradise, Jesus was chiding them through this incident intending for them to see their sinful bias. Their works would not allow them to see Abraham in the afterlife but showed them their fate as it was with the rich man. See also notes on 20:13-14.): 1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thes 4:14-18/Jn 14:3.*)

- glass- calm, as opposed to...

Isa 57:20 But the **wicked are like the troubled sea**, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 *There is no*

peace, saith my God, to the wicked. (*Emp. added*)

Rev 12:12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But **woe to you, O earth and sea**, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" (*Emp. added*) (ESV)

Rev 13:1 And I saw a beast rising **out of the sea**, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. (*Emp. added*) (ESV)

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- four living creatures-

Eze 1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, each had a human face. The four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle. (ESV)

They four are all seeing and are always before the
throne of God in Heaven.

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Rev 4:7 And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

- lion- represents nobility.

- calf- represents strength.

- face as a man- represents wisdom.

- eagle- represents swiftness.
- These four represent the power that surrounds the throne of God in Heaven (5:11). They represent the attributes of God: Eze 1:4-12.

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Rev 4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day

and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

- Either cherubim in Ezekiel (10) or seraphim in Isaiah (6) they are swift and all-seeing. Six wings each adds up to twenty-four (*perfect swiftness*). They worship God without ceasing, which shows their intelligence...

Psa 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *His commandments*: His praise endureth forever.

- Almighty- Gk.3841-παντοκράτωρ-pantokratōr-*pan-tok-rat'-ore*

From G3956 and G2904; the *all ruling*, that is, *God* (as absolute and universal *sovereign*): - Almighty, **Omnipotent**. (*Emp. added*)

- was, and is, and is to come- shows His eternal presence. He is omnipresent.

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Rev 4:9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, Who liveth for ever and ever,

Rev 4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

- Simultaneously the creatures and the elders worship the eternal God. The elders cast their *stephanos'* (*crowns/garlands of victory*) before the throne showing recognition that victory comes from and belongs to God!

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Rev 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

- Recognizing God's relationship here is essential to the persecuted saints.

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

- God's purpose for the creation is that of a father who desires offspring.

Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of **His good pleasure**. (*Emp. added*)

- God is surrounded by staggering power, i.e. the cherubim/seraphim and the all-seeing Spirit along with the innumerable angels of 5:11. The song of the elders is to their Creator Who willed their existence by His power: Heb 11:3; Isa 43:7; Ecc 12:13.

Worksheet **Revelation: Chapter 4**

1. Explain the voice “of a trumpet”. (*v. 1*)
2. Briefly describe the “One seated on the throne”. (*v. 3*)
3. Who are the “twenty-four elders” and what do they represent here in The Revelation? (*v. 4*)
4. What does the “sea of glass” represent in verse 6?
5. Describing the “four living creatures”, what do “eyes in front and behind” represent? (*v. 6*)
6. What do the “lion” like, “calf” like, “man faced” like and “eagle” like creatures represent? (*v. 7*)
7. Each creature having “six wings” together adds up to what? (*v. 8*)
8. What happens each time these creatures “give glory and honor and thanks” to God? (*v. 10*)
9. Name the three-fold recognition those before the throne deem God “worthy” of. (*v. 11*)