

Revelation 4

11-12-23

Revelation 4:1-11 (NIV) After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." ² **At once I** was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.

⁴ **Surrounding** the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. ⁶ **Also before** the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.

⁷ **The first** living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸ **Each of the** four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." ⁹ **Whenever** the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ¹¹ **"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."**

In Revelation 1:19 John was told "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.

"WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN," was a vision of glorified Jesus Christ, who came to give Him a Revelation! (Rev. 1:12-18). The state and condition of the churches was **"THE THINGS WHICH ARE."** (Commend/failures/repent/promises) Now, in Rev. 4-22 John will be shown **"WHAT WILL TAKE PLACE LATER."** (still later as of today)

This begins the next phase of the Revelation—19 chapters, an enormous amount of detail about coming events.

The Lord is going to show John WHAT MUST TAKE PLACE AFTER THIS (vs. what will take place later—1:19).

Rev. 4:1-11 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

These are not going to be happenstance events...these are specific events that must happen...must take place!

CHAP. 1—REVELATION OF JESUS...CHAP. 2-3 THE CHURCH AGE. CHAP. 4 AFTER what was spoken to the church(s).

In Chap. 3 Jesus was on the outside of the church at a closed door—in Chap. 4 He opens the door "in heaven."

It's believed by many Bible expositors that at this point the church has been/or is being taken off the earth—rapture.

Why? A VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET SAID 'COME UP HERE!'

Beginning with Ch. 4, the terms church/churches disappear until Rev. 22:16

A voice like a trumpet called John to "come up here." And sounds like this... **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NLT2)** "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. ¹⁷ **Then, together** with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ **So encourage each other with these words.**

CAUGHT UP – to take forcibly, to snatch out/away

Why a "rapture?" the taking away of the church (Christians) before the wrath of God falls on the people of the earth.

EXAMPLES: ENOCH...walked with God, then "was not." Taken up to heaven

ELIJAH... 2 Kings – caught up by a chariot of fire, a whirlwind, and taken up to heaven

***** John heard a voice as it were of a trumpet (salpinx) -- a war-trumpet" that boldly announces God's victory**

CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR A MOMENT... CAN YOU IMAGINE... ONE NIGHT... THE TRUMPET SOUNDS!

COME UP HERE! – John taken up in the spirit... some say it's symbolic of the rapture, since the Church is never mentioned again in Revelation!

When Jesus died on the cross... **Matthew 27:51-53** "At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. ⁵² The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people." WOW...HEY UNCLE BILL! A PROTOTYPE OF THE RAPTURE!!!!!!

THE RAPTURE

Before the Great Tribulation begins

Jesus comes in the air

Jesus comes FOR His church

Jesus comes in secret (thief in the night)

Jesus raptures His people before judgment

THE 2ND COMING

At the end of the Great Tribulation

Returns to the earth—Mount of Olives

Jesus comes WITH His church

Jesus comes PUBLICLY—every eye will see Him

Jesus comes WITH JUDGMENT

² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.

The One who opens a door that no one else can open brought John "in the Spirit" to heaven—God's throne room!

In the Spirit, John was before the throne. HE SAW:

A great throne -- The One sitting on it had the appearance of precious stones/jewels:

ONE COMMENTARY SAID: The stone referred to was different from the jasper stone of today. The stone was some sort of translucent crystal through which light was shining, so brightly that it was apparently like the concentrated light of a laser, representing the penetrating perfection and purity of God.



⇒ **The carnelian** (SARDINE) stone was a fiery red stone found in Sardis. Represents the justice of God.

⇒ **The rainbow** that surrounded the throne looked like emerald green. This represents the mercy of God and reminds us of God's promise of mercy He made to Noah. LAST STONES ON BREASTPLATE OF OT HIGH PRIEST.

⁴ Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

The 24 "elders" seated on 24 thrones around God's throne

Dressed in white – saved/redeemed – therefore, we know they are NOT angels

Gold crowns – Victorious by the blood of the Lamb Jesus – also depicting them in an authoritative/ruling position.

Many thoughts here...but I think most likely is that they are the 12 Patriarchs of OT (head of the 12 tribes of Israel) & 12 Apostles of NT.

Revelation 21:12 (NIV) "It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel."

Revelation 21:14 (NIV) "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

Representative of the church as a whole!

Revelation 4:5 (NIV) "From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God."

THIS IS A MAJESTIC SCENE...THE MIGHT OF THE ALMIGHTY—From the safety of heaven, John can see there's a massive storm brewing on earth—a storm of judgment! **WE ARE SAFE IN HIS ARMS!**

God's voice...so commanding--sounds like a combination of many voices and of lightnings and thunderings

Flashes of bright, glaring lightening streaking from the throne

Rumblings – to roar – Sons of thunder (loud/boisterous)

Peals of thunder – Voices (amplified)

SEVEN LAMPS – 7 spirits of God (fullness of Spirit—Rev. 1:4) – lampstands? Church? In whom the Spirit dwells?

Revelation 4:6 (NIV) “Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.”
BEFORE THE THRONE...The sea "looks like a transparent glassy sea, as if of crystal"

Revelation 4:7-8 (NIV) The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."



FOUR BEASTS

BEASTS—literal translation = living beings... the closest “living beings” to God... Angelic probably Eyes before and behind – guardians of the throne. **LIVING BEINGS DESCRIBED AS LIKE A...**



LION – symbolizes authority/supremacy

OX—symbolizes strength and servitude

MAN—symbolizes intelligence

FLYING EAGLE—symbolizes swiftness

THEIR FUNCTION = to glorify God, day and night – shows us God is worthy of all worship

Revelation 4:8 (NIV) “Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

The four living creatures (literally “beings”) are a special, exalted order of angelic being or cherubim (angels). This is clear by their close proximity to the throne of God. **Ezekiel 1:12–20** suggests that they are in constant motion around the throne. **3X HOLY** = STRONGEST EMPHASIS. HOLY = SET APART... HIGH AND ABOVE ALL ELSE!

What an indictment against humanity! How little we truly praise and worship God. Imagine! There are four beings who have been created to cry out in worship to God. In reverence they cover their eyes. Day and night they never cease crying out "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

Isaiah 6:1-7 (NIV) “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." ⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

A SCENE IN HEAVEN...AROUND THE THRONE IS TOO AWESOME TO FATHOM...

*** ⁹ **Whenever** the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."