

The Scene in Heaven

Revelation 4

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come." And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

Chapters 4 and 5 are a prologue to the three principle remaining sections of Revelation:

1. The tribulation period
2. The Millennium
3. The eternal state

John looks away from the earth and focuses his eyes on Heaven. It seems that as he looks into heaven; he sees a door and a trumpet. Perhaps this is an invitation and a welcome. It is the opposite of Jesus' offer of further enlightenment in **Revelation 3 v 20** *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.*

These Bible notes have been provided as a resource by Peacemakers International. They were produced by Dennis Marshall who founded our organisation, about which you can find more information at http://www.peacemakers-international.com/who_we_are/

The word *door* is used four times in Revelation:

Revelation 3 v 8 *I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.*

Here this establishes a door of service for the church.

Revelation 3 v 20 *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.*

The door here (mentioned twice) represents the opening of the heart to bring salvation and fellowship.

Revelation 4 v 1 *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things."*

This speaks of a personal invitation to see what was to take place presently.

So, what happened next? John is in the Spirit immediately and sees a throne on which sits Jesus. It's a remembrance of **Psalm 110 v 1** *The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."*

Thrones are mentioned some 45 times in Revelation and only 15 times in the rest of the New Testament, we could describe Revelation as the *throne book!*

Jesus is described as two precious stones, jasper and a sardius and we see that there is a rainbow around the throne that looks like an emerald, a sign of God's faithfulness to the end.

There were 24 thrones around **the** throne and 24 elders sitting on them. Who are these elders? It has been said that they are angelic beings but in the Old Testament we see that there were 24 representatives from the Levitical priesthood that were chosen to represent all the people, see **1 Chronicles 24**.

They could therefore represent all the redeemed and were likely to symbolise humans rather than angelic beings.

These Bible notes have been provided as a resource by Peacemakers International. They were produced by Dennis Marshall who founded our organisation, about which you can find more information at http://www.peacemakers-international.com/who_we_are/

They were clothed in white and wore crowns on their heads. **1 Peter 5 v 4** *And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

White is a symbol of purity, the only condition that is acceptable for entrance into heaven. A crown is the reward for faithful shepherds and elders.

There was a lot of activity coming from the throne, John was probably overawed by the thunder and lightning and the other things that were taking place. It was a foretaste of even greater things that were to come.

Next there were seven lamps of fire, the Refiner's fire that burns constantly both in heaven and on earth, here described as the seven spirits of God.

Malachi 3 v 2 *"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the Lord offerings in righteousness.*

Then there was the sea of glass like crystal, clear and without any blemish; a picture of purity and complete sanctification. Perhaps this is the sea of saints before the throne in the final chapter of the church age.

After this came the four living creatures that were around the throne, they may represent the four gospels.

The first creature was like a lion; lions are symbolic of Christ's Kingship. Matthew introduces Jesus as the King who brought in the kingdom.

Matthew 4 v 17

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The second creature resembled a calf which is symbolic of Christ's final sacrifice of death. Mark describes Christ as the Servant King

Mark 9 v 35

Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

These Bible notes have been provided as a resource by Peacemakers International. They were produced by Dennis Marshall who founded our organisation, about which you can find more information at http://www.peacemakers-international.com/who_we_are/

The face of the third creature was that of a man which symbolises Christ's humility. Luke illustrates Christ as the Son of Man, showing us His humility.

Luke 6 v 5

And He was saying to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

The fourth creature that resembled a flying eagle links Christ with heaven and earth, an untiring, ever powerful Lord. John expresses Christ as the Son of God, both His heavenly and His earthly role.

John 3 v 13

No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

John 3 v 31

"He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all..."

John 6 v 38

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me
See also **John 6 v 50-51** and **John 6 v 58**.

These four creatures worship God; will this be our final posture?