

The book of Revelation

Chapter 4

A Vision of the Heavenly Throne

1. *The call to come and see (4:1-2)*

-It is Christ who calls John to _____ to the open door (1:10-11). It is Christ who will show John the things he is about to see (1:1). "It is the voice of Christ, bidding him: 'Come up here.'" (94)

"The opened door and heavenly call initiate John's summons as prophet to enter the council chamber of the King of kings, to hear His plans and purposes and then to bring His message to His people. 'Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets' (Amos 3:7)." (Johnson, 97).

2. *Description of the One who sits on the Throne (4:3-6)*

-Before the Lord tells John of the _____ that the Church must endure on earth (Rev. 6), He gives John a glimpse of the throne and the One seated on it.

"These chapters, moreover, do not give us a picture of heaven. They describe the entire universe from the aspect of heaven. The purpose of this vision is to show us, in beautiful symbolism, that all things are governed by the Lord on the throne. 'All things' must include our trials and tribulations. That is the point." (95)

"Only when we view all things, including our tribulations (chapter 6), from the aspect of the throne, shall we gain a _____ insight into history." (94)

-The One seated on the throne is God the Father. "What the apostle describes is not God Himself, for He _____ be described (Exodus 20:4)." (97)

"John's description of the appearance of the One on the throne is restrained, offering nothing that could be turned into a forbidden image. Through John's eyes we see no features but only color and texture, conveyed in simile." (Johnson, 98)

-Around the throne was a rainbow that was green in color. While one does not want to stretch too far in their interpretations of these visions it is a fairly common interpretation to see the rainbow around the throne as symbolic of God's covenant _____ to His people.

"Yet around the throne there is a rainbow translucent green in appearance, signifying that for God's children the storm is over. Christ stood in the poor sinners place." (97)

"As a memorial of the covenant of grace...it is 'round about the throne,' that in whatever way God goes forth in His actions towards His church, He may be still reminded of mercy; and that His church also, in all her prayers with Him, may remember to trust in the _____ of _____; her prayers pass to the throne through the same rainbow." (Thomas Goodwin, 555).

-The flashes of lightning and peals of thunder are symbolic of God's _____ - His terrible majesty (think of Mt. Sinai).

-The burning torches which are described as the "seven spirits of God" are symbolic of the ever-present Holy Spirit.

"Before the throne burned seven lamps, the seven Spirits of God, symbolizing the _____ of the Spirit's presence with the Father." (Johnson, 99)

-The sea of glass, like crystal, is before the throne. "We should think of it as containing, symbolically, the cleansing blood of Christ, the Son, in which the saints have 'washed their robes and made them white.'" (99)

3. *Elders and the four living creatures (4:4, 6-8)*

-The 24 elders on 24 thrones are thought by many to be a picture of the _____ church (12 patriarchs and 12 apostles).

-The four living creatures are commonly thought to be references to cherubim. "The cherubim _____ the holy things of God." Think of Eden (Gen. 3:24), the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:18), and the Holy of Holies in the Temple (1 Kings 6:23-28).

-We must remember not to "lose sight of the fact, however, that the real reason why these twenty-four thrones with their occupants are mentioned here is to enhance the _____ of the throne that stands in the center." (98) It is the same with the cherubim they are introduced not primarily for us to focus on them but to "enhance the _____ of the throne." (100)

4. *Praise to the One seated on the throne (4:8-11)*

-The cherubim worship the thrice holy God and praise Him. "They ascribe glory and honor and thanksgiving to the ever-living One who sits upon the throne." (100)

"The living creatures' praise is called a thanksgiving, although they speak not of God's deeds but of His attributes. God is to be _____ just for being who He is: the all-holy, Almighty, ever-living One." (Johnson, 102)

- "The elders, symbolizing the entire host of the redeemed, fall down, in deep humility rendering divine homage; they worship, do obeisance, and cast their crowns of victory before the throne, fully realizing that they owe their victory of the Lord on the throne..." (101) The elders praise Him for His work of _____ (the praises for His work in redemption are coming in the next chapter).