

“A Throne”

Revelation 4:1-11

Introduction: The first event that takes place after the rapture is symbolized in Revelation 4. This is the first thing that takes place for the believer when the rapture takes place.

All of the events that take place recorded here take place around “a throne.” It is the focal point of the chapter and the focal point of this outline.

I. THE PERSON ON THE THRONE – VS. 1-3

A. The Person on the throne is seen as the door that “opened in heaven” – vs. 1a

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven”

1. A door speaks of entrance – the way in

Joh 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.**

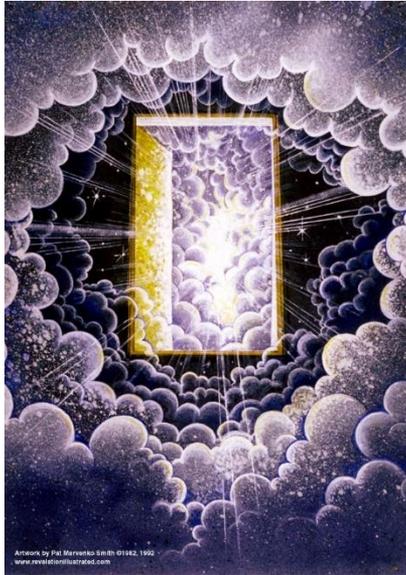
Joh 10:9 **I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.**

2. The door “opened in heaven” speaks of the way into heaven – again, you can only enter at the door – points to the first door mentioned in Scripture that had to do with worship – the door of the tabernacle

Exo 26:36 **And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought**

with needlework.

3. An image of what this door may look like as drawn by Pat Marvenko Smith



B. The voice of the Person on the throne – vs. 1b

“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”

1. It is described as “the first voice which I heard” – the first voice we’ll hear in heaven will be that of the One on the throne – that of our Saviour
2. It is described also as “a trumpet talking with me”

- a) The trumpet is mentioned several other times in the Bible in relation to the coming of the Lord

Mat 24:30-31 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

- b) The voice John heard was the voice of the Lamb on the throne – the Son of God – it is His voice that will be the trumpet that sounds that calls His bride to heaven

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

- c) The trumpet spoken of here was the trumpet call to attention, especially at the time of war – it was a specific, peculiar sound that when heard it “spoke” that it was time to come together – here it spoke that it was time to “Come up hither”

C. The vision of Who was on the throne – vs. 2-3



1. It says that the Person on the throne was “to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone”
 - a) These are two of the stones that were on the High Priest’s robe to represent the 12 tribes of Israel – they are the first and last of these 12 stones – Ex. 28:17-21

Exo 28:17-21 And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, *even* four rows of stones: *the first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: *this shall be* the first row. **18** And the second row *shall be* an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. **19** And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. **20** And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. **21** And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.

- b) The jasper represented Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob; and the sardine stone represented Benjamin, the last of the sons of Jacob – in being the first and last stones they can be considered as comprising a representation of all the other stones as well – representing the whole of God’s covenant people (John Walvoord)
- c) The name “Reuben” means “behold, a son;” and the name “Benjamin” means “son of my right hand” – both represent Christ as the Son of God and the Son at the right hand of the Father
- d) The stone’s colors represent the pure holiness of God (jasper being described in Rev. 21:11 as clear as crystal) and the blood atonement (sardine, or sardius, being red in color)
- e) They also represent majesty and splendor as these two stones are mentioned to describe the majesty of the king of Tyrus in Ezek. 28:13, as well as in the description of the foundation of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19-20)

Eze 28:13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

Rev 21:19-20 And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second,

sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; (20) The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

2. Vs. 3 also says there is “a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald”

- a) The words “round about” mean a complete circle – it wasn’t a half circle as the rainbow in the sky today, but it formed a complete circle which could represent God’s perfection and eternity, as well as His absolute sovereignty, unbroken power and love and mercy
- b) The fact it is called a rainbow points to the first rainbow after the flood – it was a covenant between God and man and this rainbow typifies the covenant God made with man that heaven could be his home if he believed in Christ
- c) Although the rainbow that is seen in the sky today has several colors in it, the one predominant color of this rainbow that was seen in the vision by John was that of the emerald – green

(1) Green is considered the most pleasant color to look upon

(2) The emerald was Judah’s stone, the tribe which our Lord came through

(3) It was an ancient wedding stone – we

are the bride of Christ and when we get to heaven we will participate in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb

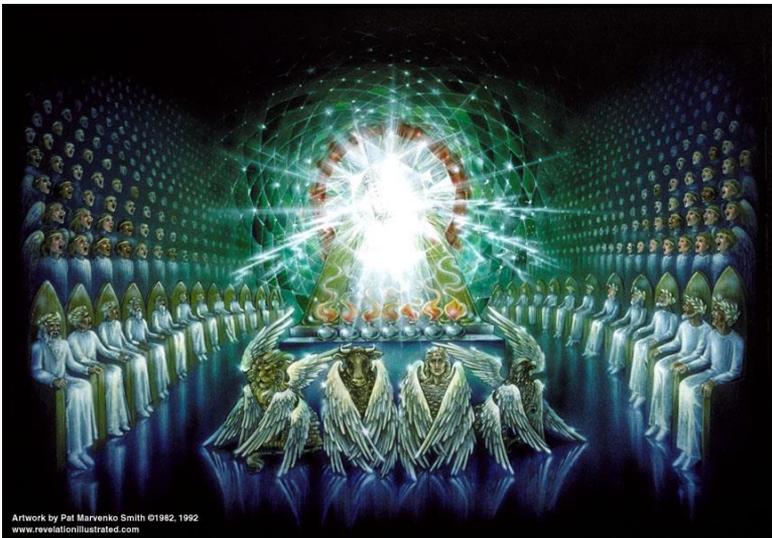
(4) Green represents new life – as in the spring – the only ones in heaven will be those that have the new life in Christ

Conclusion: The Person on the throne is the One we will want to see – and He is the One we will see first! What a wonderful truth that is!

When all this work here is done, and our rest begins there, the first thing we will see is the One Who paid our sin debt!

II. THE PEOPLE AROUND THE THRONE – VS. 4-8

A. Not just people, but beings as well – there were “four beasts” mentioned along with the 24 elders



B. Again, the term "round about" indicates to circle, or encircle – the 24 "seats" and "elders" were seated in a complete circle surrounding the throne of God

C. The term for "seats" is the same word translated "throne" in respect to the throne of God

1. It is translated "seat" here to denote it is in a lesser position than the throne upon which Christ was seated
2. It is still a position of authority, however, and is pointing, in one aspect, to the fact that the saints of God will rule and reign with Him during the Millennium

D. Sitting upon those seats are "four and twenty elders"

1. The fact that they were seen "sitting" at this point in the vision by John shows that their work was finished – their job on earth was done
2. We cannot be dogmatic as to whom these 24 elders represent but it can be said with some certainty, based on the use of the term in the Bible, that they represent the saints from the Old and New Testament: 12 from the Old (the 12 tribes of Israel) and 12 from the New (the 12 Apostles).

[Mat 19:27-28](#) Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? (28) And Jesus said unto them,

Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luk 22:29-30 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; (30) That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

3. These 24 elders, and the beasts mentioned here, are seen several more times throughout the book of Revelation in relation to the unfolding of future events – 5:8, 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4

Rev 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Rev 5:14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Rev 7:11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Rev 11:16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

Rev 19:4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

4. They are seen as “clothed in white raiment” – this is indicative of their

holiness and purity – they represent the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb that has cleansed us from sin and made us “whiter than snow” (Ps. 51:6)

5. “And they had on their heads crowns of gold”

a) There are two types of crowns mentioned in scripture, as well as in the Greek language – one is for the crown of royalty and one is called “the victor’s crown” – it is the victor’s crown that they have on their head

b) Although we will rule and reign with Christ in heaven, the crown here spoken of is not that crown but the one we receive at the Judgment Seat of Christ as rewards for good works

c) These crowns are found later in this chapter as being cast at Jesus’ feet in adoration and worship for who He is and what He’s done for us

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,

E. Vs. 5 – seen coming from the throne of God are “lightnings and thunderings and voices” – these should bring to mind what happened on Mt. Sinai when Moses received the Law from God – based upon the Law of First Mention, this scene is representative of the power of the Word of God, and what it means to us

Exo 19:16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled.

Exo 20:18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off.

F. Also mentioned in verse 5 are the "seven Spirits of God" represented by "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne"

1. These are the same "seven Spirits" as are seen in 1:4 and 3:1
2. They represent the Holy Spirit of God so that all three Persons of the Godhead are represented in this scene in heaven – the throne of God (the Father), the Person on the throne (the Son), and the seven Spirits that are at the throne

G. The first part of verse 6 references a "sea of glass like unto crystal" – this is what the events that John saw took place on and seems to be another reference to the splendor and glory of the event

H. The remainder of verse 6 through verse 8 describes the "four beasts" that were at the throne – this creature is seen in Ez. 1



1. They are seen "in the midst of the throne"
– it would appear that the whole scene, including the sea of glass, was considered the "throne" and right in the middle of that sea of glass was the seat of the throne surrounded by these 4 beasts
2. We cannot be absolutely certain what these beasts represent for it does not say but we can compare this with other passages in the Bible and see that they are more than likely a part of the angelic body – either the cherubim or the seraphim – or both
3. These beasts, or living creatures, are there to represent the person on the throne
4. They are described first as being "full of

eyes before and behind” – ever-watchful, ever-vigilant for the One on the throne, and for the “elders” – as well as the omniscience of the One on the throne

5. Each beast had particular details, as well as what they had all in common

a) The first was like a lion – the “king of beasts” – speaks of authority and dominion – an attribute of the King of Kings

Amo 3:8 The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

Dan 7:4 The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

b) The second was like a calf (or ox) – speaks of labor and strength and endurance, as of a servant – Jesus was the Suffering Servant

Pro 14:4 Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* clean: but much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

1Co 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

c) The third had a face as a man – this speaks of intelligence and dominion over creation – Jesus was a man

1Co 14:20 Brethren, be not children in

understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

- d) The fourth was like a flying eagle – the fact that this beast is seen as “flying” and considering how an eagle flies, this may speak to the speed and agility and patience in vigilance – points to the judgment of Christ

Deu 28:49 The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

Isa 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

6. Vs. 8 describes more about them

- a) They each have six wings
- b) They are full of eyes “within” – this is actually referring to the wings that are full of eyes

- 7. Although nothing can be said with any certainty as to what these beasts represent, what can be said for certainty is what they do for that is given in the last part of verse 8 – “they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” – there is another time this is said, and it is said of an angelic being in Isaiah 6

Isa 6:2-3 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

I. The people of the throne are the saints of God, and the beasts around the throne point to the Person on the throne as the Lord God Almighty – all praise goes to Him, by all of creation

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE THRONE – VS. 9-11

A. The purpose of this scene in heaven that John received in a vision of the throne and the wonder of it all is given so that we will know that the first thing we will do when we get to heaven is to fall down and worship the One that paid it all for us

B. Although the “beasts” are there to continually cry “holy, holy, holy,” there is a particular point in this scene in the vision of the first thing we’ll do in heaven where the four beasts turn and “give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne”

C. As they do this (vs. 10) the 24 elders respond

1. They “fall down before him that sat on the throne” – they prostrate themselves in humble obeisance to the King on the throne (they are seen doing this on at least

three other occurrences in the book of Revelation – 5:8, 14; 19:4)

Rev 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Rev 5:14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Rev 19:4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Psa 72:11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

Mat 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

2. They “worship him that liveth for ever and ever” – their falling down was part of their worship but this is seen as in addition to that – whether they said anything or not is not given but that they bowed in humble recognition of Who was on the throne is what’s in view
3. Then they “cast their crowns before the throne” – what a sight this will be!! A song writer wrote a few years back a song with

this in mind – “A Pile of Crowns”



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I dreamed I crossed to Heaven's side,
An angel said, "I'll be your guide;
I'll lead you thru this land so vast,
And I will save the best for last.

The mansions bright, the golden streets,
Were greater sights than I had dreamed;
But when I gazed upon His throne,
I was amazed by what I saw!

For I saw a pile of crowns, laid before the holy
Lamb;

One by one the saints had come to thank the Lord
for all He'd done;
No greater sight in Heav'n I found
Than a holy God and a pile of crowns.

My gains on earth were now as loss,
This crown I'd earned I was unworthy of;
But I made my Savior smile
When I laid it on the pile.

For I saw a pile of crowns, laid before the holy
Lamb;

One by one the saints had come to thank the Lord
for all He'd done;
No greater sight in Heav'n I found
Than a holy God and a pile of crowns.

a) An incorruptible crown

1Co 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

b) Crown of righteousness

2Ti 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that

day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

c) Crown of life

Jas 1:12 Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

d) Crown of glory

1Pe 5:1-4 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **2** Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **3** Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. **4** And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

D. Vs. 11 records for us what the purpose of the throne is

1Ch 29:11-16 Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. **12** Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all. **13** Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. **14** But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after

this sort? for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. 15 For we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding. 16 O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own.

1. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power"

a) He not only will be worthy then, He is worthy now, and He has always been worthy

b) He has the right, the authority, He is deserving (worthy), it is suitable for Him to be worshipped

c) He is worshipped when He receives of those around the throne (and of us today) the glory due Him, the honour (for what He has done for us) due Him, and the power ("dunamos" – power residing within Himself) due Him

2. "For thou hast created all things" – it's because of Him we have all we have, and it's because of Him we will have heaven and an eternity with Him

Act 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Col 1:16-17 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or

powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (17) And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Heb 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

3. "And for thy pleasure they are and were created" – all of creation was for Him – we just get the benefit

Rom 11:36 For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

Conclusion: **Oh my, what heaven will be!!!**