

# The Unveiling of Jesus Christ



The Scene in the  
Throne Room of  
Heaven

Revelation 4

Seven-headed Beast from the Luther Bible

Previously in Revelation

## Previously in Revelation

- In **Chapter 1**, we saw **John** on the island of **Patmos**, where **Christ** appeared to him in a dramatic vision.
- In **Chapters 2 & 3**, Christ dictated **7 letters** to John, which were sent to **7 specific churches** in Asia.

## Previously in Revelation

- Those churches were **real churches** in John's day.
- They also indicate the kinds of churches we can find ourselves in **right now**.
- Another application sees them as being loosely related to the **consecutive phases in church history**.

# Previously in Revelation

1. **Ephesus:** The post-apostolic church
2. **Smyrna:** The church under Roman persecution
3. **Pergamum:** The church married to the world
4. **Thyatira:** The church deeply influenced by paganism
5. **Sardis:** The dead (but falsely considered alive) church
6. **Philadelphia:** The faithful church
7. **Laodicea:** The apostate church

# Previously in Revelation

## Our Outline from Revelation 1:19

- The things which you have seen meaning the glorified Christ of Chapter 1.
- Those that are or things pertaining to the church in Chapters 2 & 3.
- Those that are to take place after this – a series of visions relating to the times of the end.

The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

Revelation 4

Introduction

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Introduction

Compare that Outline with **Revelation 4:1**,

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Introduction

- We are about to enter the heart of **Revelation**.
- These are the prophecies given to John regarding future events.
- This third and longest section of the book begins with John going to heaven.
- Before we go there, let's consider the following verses from the book of **Hebrews**.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Introduction

- Hebrews 8:5

They [the temple priests] serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Introduction

- Hebrews 9:23-24

23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Introduction

- The Tabernacle and the Temple in the Old Testament had to be constructed a certain way.
- Evidently, this was because the Israelites were building a model of that which is in heaven.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Introduction

- And that is where we are going right now.
- It is not a long chapter, so let's stand and read the whole thing.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- John is taken up to **heaven** where he stands before the very **throne** of God.
- The phrase “**in the Spirit**” may indicate some sort of vision or out of body experience.
- **Paul** once told of a something similar, but he wasn't quite sure how it happened.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- 2 Corinthians 12:2-4

2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. 3 And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— 4 and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2



*The key word in this chapter is throne; it is used fourteen times. In fact, this is a key word in the entire book, appearing forty-six times. No matter what may happen on earth, God is on His throne and is in complete control.*

*– Warren W. Wiersbe  
(1929 – 2019)*

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- Next, I would stop short of saying this passage teaches a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.
- But I would add that, taken in its overall context, there are a few things that are consistent with that idea.
- Here are seven.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

1. It is a sudden event (“at once”).
2. An open door is set before John. (Compare with the church of Philadelphia in 3:8, 10.)
3. Heaven is opened.
4. There is a voice like a trumpet. (Compare with 1 Cor. 15:52, 1 Thes. 4:16.)
5. John is caught up to the throne room of heaven.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

6. It comes at the end of the section on the Church Age dealt with in Chapters 2 & 3.
  - The “church” will not be mentioned during the coming prophecies about the Tribulation Period.
7. It signals the beginning of God’s judgment on the world which begins after this throne room scene.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- Pertaining to the doctrine, I will upload some document files for your perusal.
  1. The Rapture: Relevant Scriptures
  2. The Rapture & Second Coming
  3. The Rapture: Answering Objections

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- I will also happily send you four pdf papers (not mine, so not uploaded) which are relevant. Just ask.
  1. James Stitzinger – The Rapture in Twenty Centuries
  2. Thomas Ice – A Brief History of the Rapture
  3. Thomas Ice – A History of Pre-Darby Rapture Advocates
  4. Thomas Ice – Kept from the Hour

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- Since this is the perspective I believe, it will come up from time to time throughout **Revelation**.
- Where some see **the church**, I might see **Israel**.
- Where some see **the church**, I might see **Gentile saints** who are not part of the church.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:1-2

- We are defining the church as follows:
- The church is the full collection of regenerated believers lasting from Pentecost to the Rapture.
- This period begins on the day of the Spirit's descent, or "when he comes" (John 16:8)
- It ends on the day of His departure, when the restrainer "is taken out of the way." (2 Thess 2:6-7)



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:3

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:3

- This is picture of the throne itself.
- There may be special meanings to these colors and stones and so on.
- I don't have a strong opinion on that.
- Emerald is of course green.
- While jasper can be clearer, both it and carnelian can be red or reddish.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- There are two (maybe three) main outlooks on who these elders are.
  1. They are a special class of angels who first appear in the Bible here.
  2. They are human.
    - A. They represent both Israel and the church.
    - B. They represent the glorified church.

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# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- *Elders* is a term used for men with delegated authority in both the Old and New Testaments.
- It is not used of angels.
- They claim to be redeemed (KJV or related) or ransomed by the blood of Christ from every nation.
- In other translations, they at least sing of those who are. (5:9)

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- They are clothed in **white robes** as Jesus, just a moment ago in **Chapter 3**, said the church would be.
- See **3:4, 5, 18**.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- They are wearing **crowns**. The Greek word is *stephanos*, which is a wreath-like crown.
- It is more a crown of victory or reward than that denoting ruling authority.
- The latter would more likely be a *diadema*. See **Rev 13:1, 19:12**.



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- This is the type of crown that is repeatedly promised to the Christian.
- See 1 Cor 9:25; 2 Tim 2:5, 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4; Rev 2:10, 3:11.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- These elders appear to function in the role of priests by having harps and bowls of incense (Rev 5:8).
- The priests were responsible for worship at the Temple during the Old Testament.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- In **1 Chron. 24**, the entire priesthood was divided into **24 courses**.
- Each of these was represented by one head of a father's house.
- Therefore, these **24 men** can logically represent the entire church.
- We are a holy and royal priesthood of believers (**1 Pet 2:5, 9-10, Rev 1:6**).

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

- There is a generally chronological flow to **Revelation** and to the Bible as a whole.
- In that light we may note the following.
- These will point to the **elders** as representing the **church in glory**.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

1. They were not present in heaven earlier – during the times of **Isaiah** and **Ezekiel**.
  - Those two prophets viewed a similar scene.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

2. They are present in the heavenly panorama that John views (**Rev 4-5**).
  - This is immediately after the prophecy regarding the **Church Age** (**Rev 2-3**),
  - This is also just before the **Tribulation** period begins (**Rev 6**).

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:4

3. They speak of a yet future reign on the earth.
  - Notice the “shall reign” of Rev 5:10.
  - This will not happen until after the Tribulation when Christ returns.
  - At that point he will begin His Millennial Kingdom.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:5 (and 5:6)



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:5 (and 5:6)

- The seven torches of fire and the seven eyes of the Lamb are the Seven Spirits. (5:6)
- This points to the Seven Spirits being the one Holy Spirit.
- See also:
  - Revelation 1:4 & 3:1
  - Isaiah 11:2
  - Zechariah 4

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:6

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:6

- A sea of glass, like crystal
- In the Old Testament, there was bronze basin or sea.
- It stood at the entrance to both the Tabernacle and the Temple in the Old Testament.
- Remember those introductory verses from Hebrews.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:6-8

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:6-8

- Compare this to these Old Testament scenes:
  - **Isaiah** saw seraphim with six wings who cried “**Holy, holy, holy!**”
  - The term **seraphim** only appears in **Isaiah 6**.
  - **Ezekiel** sees **four living creatures** in **Ezek 1**, which he sees again and calls **cherubim** in **Ezek 10**.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:6-8

- There were **four cherubim** in the Holy of Holies in both the Tabernacle and the Temple.
- **Two stood wing-to-wing** behind and above the Ark of the Covenant.
- **Two more bowed** facing the center of the mercy seat, which covered the Ark.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:9-11

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:9-11

- Think back to the **elders** as representing **the church**:
- The church may already come boldly before the throne of grace in prayer (**Heb 4:16**),
- Looking forward, we will someday be brought into the holiest place of all.
- We will come near the throne with the four cherubim, at the Rapture.



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4:9-11

- The elders **cast their crowns** before the throne of God.
- Though this is a **wreath-like crown** of reward (*stephanos*), those who possess it are not proud of it.
- In heaven our rewards will seem insignificant in the presence of God.

The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

Revelation 4

Conclusions

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions

- Be holy.
- In case we didn't know it, in **Revelation 4:8**, the four living creatures remind us that God is **Holy, holy, holy!**

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions

- Leviticus 11:44a

For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions

- 1 Peter 1:13-16

13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions

- Worship in heaven is unceasing.
- Let's imitate the living creatures and elders by taking on a nonstop attitude of worship right here and now.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions

- John 4:23-24

23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions

- Romans 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.



# The Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven

## Revelation 4

## Conclusions



*Heaven will be all about worship. And why not? Why shouldn't we engage in unbridled worship? We will know all things. All of our questions will be answered. All of our pain will be removed. All of our tears will be dried. So we will be worshiping.*

*– Greg Laurie,  
Pastor, Evangelist, Author*