



I AM

THE THRONE ROOM OF HEAVEN

Revelation 4

The Daily Word from Laura Martin

Imagine John all alone on an island when the Spirit of God entrusted him with visions of what was to come and instructions to send his visions to the seven churches of Asia. As John was in the Spirit, he saw the One seated on a throne encircled by 24 elders on 24 thrones. He described four living creatures continuously saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and who is coming.” The 24 elders cast their earned crowns before the throne of the One and proclaim, “Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things.”

You may not physically be gathered around the throne of heaven, but you can take time to worship the Lord. Posture yourself to worship Him. Give Him the “crowns” in your life. Whatever you feel you have gained, *surrender it all to the Lord*. Give thanks to the Lord. Recognize God as the author and creator of all things, who is deserving of all honor, power, and glory. Worship Him because He is truly worthy of it all. This life is not about you on earth, it is about the Lord and His kingdom that is to come in heaven. Day and night, let your praise rise to the one who is worthy of it all.

“The 24 elders fall down before the One seated on the throne, worship the One who lives forever and ever, cast their crowns before the throne, and say: Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and because of Your will they exist and were created.”

— Revelation 4:10–11

FURTHER SCRIPTURE

- *Jeremiah 10:7* — “Who should not fear You, King of the nations? It is what You deserve. For among all the wise people of the nations and among all their kingdoms, there is no one like You.”
- *Colossians 1:16* — “For everything was created by Him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”
- *Revelation 4:8* — “Each of the four living creatures had six wings; they were covered with eyes around and inside. Day and night they never stop saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, who is, and who is coming.”



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Teaching Notes

INTRO

The garden in Genesis ties into Revelation as it pointed to the Messiah. In Revelation 4, John had a vision of Christ. Christ told John to talk to His seven churches. The seven churches were similar to the Israelites who kept turning away from God. The churches believed in Christ but, at some point, they turned away from Him.

Revelation 1:19 outlines the entire book, and chapter 4 gives the third part of what would take place for each of the seven churches. Revelation 1:19 basically asked the question: “What will take place next?” These verses are about what is to come—a future word that would come to fruition.

TEACHING

Revelation 4:1-11: Revelation 4 contains a vision of what worshipping in heaven will be like. John saw an open door because Christ would no longer be knocking. The open door was a vision of welcoming the redeemed into the presence of God. God’s voice sounded like a trumpet. According to Warren Wiersbe, the invitation is a picture of God on His throne.¹

In verse 2 John was now in the spirit. According to John MacArthur, John allowed all of his senses to be taken over by God: “This was not a dream. John was supernaturally transported out of the material world awake—not sleeping—to an experience beyond the normal senses. The Holy Spirit empowered his senses to perceive revelation from God (cf. Acts 10:11).”² All of John’s senses were heightened. There would be some practical function for every prophetic word. This took place in the third heaven where God was seated on His throne.

Verse 3 describes what surrounded the throne. The one seated there was like precious stones, jasper, and carnelian. Jasper is described as being crystal clear, similar to a diamond. MacArthur states, “John describes this stone as ‘crystal clear’ (21:11), probably referring to a diamond, which refracts all the colors of the spectrum in wondrous brilliance.”³ The carnelian stone has a fiery, ruby color, so it appeared as fire.

MacArthur also explains that “a cool, emerald-green hue dominates the multicolored rainbow surrounding God’s throne (cf. Ezekiel 1:28). From the time of Noah, the rainbow became a sign of God’s faithfulness to His Word, His promises, and His Noahic covenant (Genesis 9:12–17).”⁴ As humans, it is difficult to understand the image of God on His throne.

While he was stranded on an island, because he was preaching the gospel too much, John received the vision from an angel. God was on His throne, He looked like a clear diamond stone, and He was surrounded by an emerald green rainbow. The true image of what John saw was indescribable.

Around the throne of God were an additional 24 thrones. Elders, in white robes and with golden crowns, sat on each of the thrones. These may have represented some kind of purity or righteousness. They also may have represented the redeemed. MacArthur points out, “The question is which redeemed? Not Israel, since the nation is not yet saved, glorified, and coronated.”⁵

Nelson’s Commentary explains, “The identity of the elders is not certain. Some think that they represent the church or believers in heaven, but it seems preferable to view the elders as angels who comprise a heavenly ruling council (Jeremiah 23:18, 22).”⁶ Scholars have different perspectives. Regardless of their interpretations, they agree that God has chosen these 24 elders to surround the throne.

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary: New Testament: Ephesians-Revelation* (Colorado Springs, David C. Cook, 1989), p. 528.

² John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishing, 2005), p. 2002.

³ MacArthur, p. 2002.

⁴ MacArthur, p. 2002.

⁵ MacArthur, p. 2002.

⁶ Earl Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, and H. Wayne House, eds., *Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), p. 1742.



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In verse 5, flashes of lightning appear. Then seven spirits of God appear. *Nelson's Commentary* explains, "Seven Spirits of God as represented by seven lamps presents the fullness of the sevenfold character of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2, 3)."⁷ No one knows for sure what the seven spirits represent.

In verse 6, a sea of glass, like crystal, was before the throne. Revelation 21:1 explains that the sea would no longer exist. Therefore, the image of the crystal before the throne was not water.

Four creatures full of eyes and who are able to see everything will appear. The creatures each had six wings. According to *Nelson's Commentary*, "The lion, calf, man, and eagle have been understood as referring to the four Gospels with their distinctive portrayals of Christ."⁸ The creatures sing hymns.

Verse 10 states the elders will cast their crowns before the throne. They were aware that everything came from God. Then the elders started to sing with the four creatures.

CLOSING

The singing was worship before the Lord and God got all the glory. This worship happens day and night and never stops. John saw these images and with no one to tell he wrote it all down. All who were present experienced the presence of the living God. God alone was worthy to receive the glory, honor, and power.

Revelation 1 is where John received the vision from Christ. Revelation 2—3 is about the churches keeping their eyes on Christ. Revelation 4 describes John's view of the throne, those who were present and what was taking place.

⁷ Nelson's Commentary, p. 1742.

⁸ Nelson's Commentary, p. 1742.



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Reading Guide Questions

1. John was shown a throne in heaven with a rainbow around it. What connection, if any, do you think this rainbow has with the covenant God made with Noah and all humankind (Genesis 9:11–17)? Look into what the significance is of the rainbow's color (emerald) and the stones used to describe the One sitting on the throne in Revelation 4:3.*

**Note: The rainbow around the throne is shades of green. Green represents grace/mercy. The colors emanating from the One who sits on the throne are carnelian (a deep red) signifying God's wrath (justice), which man does not want to approach, and jasper (diamond, clear, and white light) signifying God's purity and righteousness, which man cannot approach. Yet in Hebrews we are told we can confidently approach the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16). So, the emerald rainbow of God's grace is a picture of what makes that possible.*

2. Do you think the 24 elders were representatives of a group of people or were specific people? What do you think their crowns signified? (2 Timothy 4:8)
3. Where else in Scripture do we see a description similar to Revelation 4:5a? (Exodus 19:16; Hebrews 12:18–19)
4. There was a sea of glass like crystal before the throne. Do you think the bronze laver, also known as the bronze sea, was a shadow or symbol of this sea of glass? What was the purpose of the bronze laver or sea? (Exodus 30:18–21; 2 Kings 25:13; Hebrews 8:5)
5. As the four living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, what will the 24 elders be doing (Revelation 4:9–11)? Why do you think John was shown this?
6. What did the Holy Spirit highlight to you in Revelation 4 through the reading or the teaching?

