

Lesson 9: The Throne Room

Key Text: Revelation 4

Chapter Outline

- I. Come Up Here! (4:1)
- II. A Throne in Heaven (4:2,3)
- III. 24 Elders Around the Throne (4:4)
- IV. Lightning! Thundering! Voices! (4:5)
- V. In the Midst of the Throne (4:6)
- VI. 4 Living Creatures (4:7-9)
- VII. You Are Worthy! (4:10,11)

Chapter Synopsis

The seven churches have received from the glorified Christ both the appraisal of their spiritual condition and counsel on how to correct and improve their condition. The scene now shifts from the earth to heaven and from John's time to the future, from his perspective. The section of the narrative starts Revelation 4 gives us a glimpse into the throne room of God Almighty. We are also given the first This chapter is important because the throne of God and the activities surrounding it dominates the book of Revelation. It is from this point forward that the visions will be described using highly symbolic language which must be interpreted through the lens of the Old Testament and key New Testament texts.

Key Terms (in order of appearance in the chapter)

- "After these things" (1) – Used to show a new section of the narrative and a new vision.
- "door standing open" (1) – Genesis 28:17; Revelation 3:8 (access to God's presence)
- "voice...like a trumpet" (1) – Revelation 1:10 (voice of Christ)

- “Come up here” (1) – Exodus 19:24 (invitation to God’s presence)
- “things which must take place after this” (1)– Revelation 1:19
- “in the Spirit” (2) – Revelation 1:10; 2 Peter 1:21 (moved by Holy Spirit)
- “throne” (13 times) - Isaiah 1:1; 1 Kings 3:28 (reign & judgment)
- “jasper & sardius...emerald” (3) - Exodus 28:17-21 (Stones listed in order of tribes they represent: Reuben (first), Benjamin (last)...Judah (line of Jesus), Ezekiel 28:13; Revelation 21:19,20 (paradise; riches of New Jerusalem)
- “rainbow” – Genesis 9:16 (mercy surrounds his rule and judgment)
- “twenty-four elders” – Matthew 27:51-53; Ephesians 4:8;
 - a. “crown” – 2 Timothy 4:7,8 (crown of victory)
 - b. “clothed in white” – Revelation 3:18
- “Lightnings, thunderings, voices” – Exodus 19:16 (appearance of God’s glory)
- “seven Spirits of God” – Zechariah 4:2-6 (fullness of God’s Spirit)
- “sea of glass” – Mark 5:39, Genesis 1:2
- “four living creatures” – paired with elders to model appropriate worship. The animallike appearances of these four creatures include majesty and power (the *lion*), faithfulness (the *ox*), intelligence (the *man*), and sovereignty (the *eagle*)
- “holy, holy, holy” – Isaiah 6:3

Retrospect

The throne of God was the place where those who suffered and were persecuted or unfairly treated could come to present their prayer and obtain deliverance from God; to all of them the divine throne was the unshakable foundation of their faith and trust in God. In elaborating upon this Old Testament significance of the divine throne, John endeavors to communicate the clear message to his fellow Christians that the throne of God is the controlling force in this universe.

No doubt the scene in Revelation 4 sets the stage for the scene described in chapter 5. We see John observing the majestic splendor of the heavenly throne room portrayed in terms of the dazzling light of the precious stones, a many-colored rainbow, lightning, sound and thunder, and the seven torches of burning fire. Also, the crystal surface of the sea of glass stretches out before the throne and reflects the flashing, many-colored lights from the throne. All attention suddenly focuses on the glorious throne surrounded by the four exalted angels leading the heavenly hosts in worship and praise, and the twenty-four elders as the representatives of redeemed humanity. They are together with the heavenly hosts assembled there in the throne room in the expectant atmosphere to welcome Jesus who is about to be enthroned at the right hand of the Father.

Appendix A

Descriptions of God's Throne

REVELATION 4	EZEKIEL 1
the throne with God sitting on it (vv. 2–5)	the throne with God sitting on it (vv. 26–28)
rainbow around the throne (v. 3b)	rainbow around the throne (v. 26)
seven lamps of fire (v. 4b)	torches of fire (v. 13)
flashes of lightning and thunder (v. 5)	flashes of lightning and storm (vv. 4, 13)
four living beings (vv. 6–8) —six wings —faces of a lion, calf, man, and eagle —“full of eyes around and within” (v. 8)	four living beings (vv. 5–10) —four wings —faces of a man, lion, bull, and eagle —“full of eyes all around” (v. 18)
spread like a sea of glass (v. 6)	crystal spread (vv. 22–26)