

Session Fifteen:

Revelation 4:1-11

“The Throne Of God”

I) Introduction

- A) Understanding **Revelation 4-5** in the overall storyline of scripture, specifically as it relates to God’s end time purposes does three primary things;
- 1) *It anchors our life in this age as we walk through personal and eschatological trouble.*
 - 2) *It gives us confidence about the One who is truly overseeing all things both in heaven and on earth, in this age and the age to come.*
 - 3) *It leads us into unceasing worship and adoration of the Godhead.*
- B) The keyword in **Revelation 4** is the word throne as it’s used 16 times in just 11 verses. In this age, rulers, kings, leaders and men, masquerade on the earth as having power but we see in **Revelation 4** that there is only One who’s seated upon the throne and He possesses all power in heaven and on earth.
- C) This chapter calms our spirit, gives rest to our souls and reminds us that the government is upon His shoulders (**Isaiah 9:6**). It also tells us that God is totally separated from His creation as He is Infinite and not finite. God is 3x HOLY, meaning that He is totally other than, completely separated from yet involved with us because He wants to be, not because He has to be.

II) John’s Vision And The Throne Of God (Revelation 4:1-2)

- A) **Revelation 4:1-2** “After these things I looked and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, come up here and I will show you things which must take place after this. Immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.”
- 1) **Revelation 3:21** “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”
 1. The final eschatological promise given to the Churches, is that those who overcome would be able to sit on a throne with Jesus, as He sat down with His Father on His throne.
 2. Directly following Jesus’ promise of a future throne to the overcoming Churches of **Revelation 2-3**, John is then shown both the Father’s throne and the Father Himself.
 - 2) After the Patmos encounter with the Risen Christ (**Revelation 1-3**), John looks up and sees a door standing open in heaven. This open door is different from the other doors mentioned in **Revelation 3:7-8,20**.

- 3) We know from the rest of this chapter, that this door is a doorway of Revelation into the throne of God and of God Himself.
 - 4) This voice which John hears is the voice of Christ speaking to him (**Rev.1:10-13**) and giving him the invitation to come up and see what he could never see on his own. With the invitation from God always comes the grace to respond *"...the first voice...said come up here...immediately I was in the Spirit..."*
- B) *"Immediately I was in the Spirit and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne."*
- 1) John is making it clear once again that He has been transported by the Holy Spirit to a place that he couldn't go on his own (**Rev. 1:10**). The Holy Spirit is our Divine escort into the Knowledge of God.
 - 2) It's here that John sees the "Control Center" of human history. And in the middle of this "Control Center" John doesn't see many Gods, or a few Gods, but One God who's throne is firmly established (set).
 1. **Hebrews 12:28** *"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence."*

III) The Nature Of God As Seen From His Throne (Revelation 4:3)

- A) **Revelation 4:3** *"And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald."*
- 1) Here in **Revelation 4:3** we gain insight into the One who is seated upon the throne.
 1. **He was like a Jasper** = This jasper (Diamond) speaks about what God looks like. This is speaking about the bright light which radiates from His Personhood.
 - (a) **Song of Songs 5:10** *"My Beloved is white (dazzling, bright white) and ruddy."*
 - (b) **1st Timothy 6:16** *"...who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see..."*
 - (c) **2nd Corinthians 4:6** *"For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*
 2. **He was like a sardius** = This sardius stone is a deep red stone that speaks about how God feels. The God who's eyes are like flames of fire (**Rev. 1:14**) lets us know that it's really His heart which is burning for humans.
 - (a) **Song of Songs 4:9** *"You have ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse; you have ravished My heart."*
 - (b) **Song of Songs 8:6** *"...For love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; it's flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame."*

3. **And there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald** = This speaks about the mercy of God that rules and reigns over everything He does. Everything that proceeds from His "Control Center" is done with mercy.
 - (a) The emerald stone is a green stone which alludes to life, health and growth. The rainbow is spoken of as a symbol of mercy because of God's covenant to Noah (**Genesis 9:13-17**). Ezekiel also saw the Emerald rainbow around His throne (**Ezekiel 1:28**).
 - (b) **Song of Songs 1:16** *"Behold, you are handsome, my Beloved. Yes, pleasant! Also our bed is green."*
 - (c) In light of the following chapters (**6-19**) it's critical that we see the various facets of God's nature alongside the stability of God Himself, His throne and His kingdom.

IV) The Activity Around The Throne Of God (Revelation 4:4-11)

- A) **Revelation 4:4** *"Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads."*
 - 1) These 24 elders that are seated on 24 thrones around the throne of God are a little bit mysterious. The four general assumptions are; **1) Angels 2) Exalted Old Testament saints 3) Angels who corporately represent Old and New covenant saints 4) Patriarchs from the 12 tribes and the 12 Apostles.**
 - 2) Nevertheless, it's clear that they represent the governmental ministry of God as shared labors with Him. The Father has chosen both angels and humans to share in His leadership over the nations not because He has to, but because He wants to.
- B) **Revelation 4:5** *"And from the throne proceeded lightning's, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirit's of God."*
 - 1) Through verse 5 we are able to see there is a holy storm that surrounds the High and Lofty God! There's large demonstrations of power through lighting, thundering and noises.
 1. When lightning and thunder take place around us, it both smalls us up, and puts into perspective our lack of control. It's the terrifying reality of an Omnipotent God.
 - 2) The seven lamps of fire speak the fullness of the Holy Spirit and His activity around the throne of God.
- C) **Revelation 4:6-7** *"Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle."*
 - 1) There is great speculation about this sea of glass among commentators, but I like to think that it speaks of the peace, and tranquility before the throne of God in light of what is about to follow in **Revelation 6-19**.

1. **Psalm 29:10-11** *"The Lord sat enthroned at the Flood, and the Lord sits as King forever. The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace."*
- 2) *"...in the midst of the Throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures..."* These four living creatures are called seraphim which literally means "The Burning ones." These living creatures are nearest to God's throne and show forth four different faces of God in redemption.
 1. **The first living creature was like a lion** = This face speaks of courage, the fierce fight and boldness that's needed to preserve. It's royalty, majesty and power.
 2. **The second living creature was like a calf (OX)** = This face speaks of serving through the mundane. It's strength and endurance.
 3. **The third living creature had a face like a man** = This face speaks of intelligence and wisdom. Humanity has dignity that surpasses all animals.
 4. **The fourth living creature was like a flying eagle** = This face speaks of swiftness and sovereignty.
- D) **Revelation 4:8** *"The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. They do not rest day or night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!!"*
 - 1) We can understand these four living creatures when we look first at the **Isaiah 6** vision of the throne room;
 1. **Isaiah 6:2** *"Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face (reverence and awe of God—not even looking at Him) with two he covered his feet (this speaks again of reverence and modesty, covering their nothingness in the presence of God) and with two he flew (this speaks of their readiness to do the will of God, it's instant obedience)."*
 - 2) The eyes around and within speak of their ability to see Him who sits on the throne. They never take their eyes off of Him who sits upon the throne. Throughout created History, these burning ones gaze upon God unceasingly.
 - 3) This passage tells us that our Theology (our study of God) should always lead us into doxology (praise of God). When we see Him rightly we also respond rightly in worship.
 - 4) The joy of Revelation (eyes around and within) touching our hearts is that it evokes worship. Our lack of worship isn't a music issue or a style problem, it's a revelation issue. Because we see little we worship little.
 - 5) Our response to God is often based on the culture of our Church, our city, our state, our nation or even our globe, but this isn't a worthy response. Our worship must be based on reality (**Revelation 4**) not experience. And reality says, He's worshipped night and day.