

## CHAPTER 4

### The Heavenly Scene

#### *Worship of the Creator*

#### *Revelation 4:1-11*

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##### *Scene in Heaven*

1. **After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.”**

The voice John now hears is being compared to a trumpet; it is not a trumpet, but rather sounds like one, this indicates the loud beauty of the orator’s voice. John sees an open door in heaven, but he was not yet in heaven. The voice then calls out to him, “Come up here.” How is it that a voice from heaven could tell a human being to come up to heaven? Note, the reason for John’s invitation was to reveal God’s agenda not for John’s pleasure.

2. **Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.**

After the voice calls to John, “Come up here,” John immediately has an outer body experience. His spirit left his body and ascended into the heaven where he immediately encountered the throne of God.

3. **And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.**

The person sitting on the throne is being compared to what we would consider precious stones. His appearance was like a diamond (jasper) and sardius. Imagine looking at a person whose entire body is clear and reflective with glowing red reflectors within. All around the throne resembled the one sitting on it, for it was like an emerald rainbow all around. Here we see the essence of the One who is light. He is not to be seen with the eyes; His radiance is blinding and His presence, holy.

#### **John 3:19**

“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

**John 12:46**

"I have come *as* Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

**Acts 22:6**

"But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me,

**Acts 22:9**

"And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.

**1 Thessalonians 5:5**

For you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;

**1 Timothy 6:16**

Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him *be* honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

**James 1:17**

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

**1 John 1:5**

This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all

**1 John 1:7**

But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

**1 John 2:8**

On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

**Revelation 21:24**

The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

**Revelation 22:5**

And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

**4. Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.**

No one knows the identity of the 24 elders or the significance of their thrones or crowns. However, the fact that they are dressed in white and wearing crowns seems to indicate that they have already been judged. Which would indicate that the rapture had already happened and the “bema seat” judgement had already taken place. Whatever the identity of the elders, it is very important to note that this is our first encounter with human beings in the throne room of God; every time hereafter when we encounter the 24 elders they will always be in the position of high praise towards God.

**5. Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;**

Flashes of lightning are continually coming from the throne demonstrating both power and might. The lightning flashing from His glorious appearance is inconceivable. No human eyes are able to sustain their gaze at such incomprehensible splendor; not even the angels dear gaze at His glory.

Just as in chapter one, we find seven lamps burning, but this time it is before the throne of God and just as the Spirit was present in chapter one so is He ever present in His fullness being seen as the seven Spirits of God.

**6. And before the throne *there was something* like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.**

How are we to understand this sea? Note, that it is not a sea like we know, but rather something like a sea, except it is glass, like crystal. Now this is before the throne. Remember, lighting is flashing with rumblings and peals of thunder, the sea is like crystal, the person on the throne is like jasper stone and a sardius in appearance and there is an emerald rainbow all around as the lightning is flashing. When light hits any one of the stones/crystals described the reflection would be amazing. So imagine all at one time, with a lightning more powerful than anything we are able to imagine. What are the possibilities on one being able to withstand such brilliance for any length of time (hence, the angels who covers in His presence)?

Now in the center and around the throne are four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. When John sees these beings he does not called them angels, but rather creatures. This is most likely due to the fact that he had never seen anything like them before. These creatures are said to be in the center and around the throne. How is it that they could be in the center and around the throne at the same time? What’s the significance of the eyes all over, in the front and behind?

**7 The first creature *was* like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature *was* like a flying eagle.**

Just as John saw the Holy Spirit as burning lamps (symbolically), he now sees these creatures as having the face of a lion, calf, a man and an eagle (this too is most likely symbolism). Walvoord suggested that:

The four living creatures symbolically represent the attributes of God including His omniscience and omnipresence (indicated by the creatures being full of eyes)—with the four animals bringing out other attributes of God: the lion indicating majesty and omnipotence; the ox, typical of faithful labor and patience; man, indicating intelligence; and the eagle, the greatest bird, representing supreme sovereignty. Another possible view is that they represent Christ as revealed in the four Gospels: in Matthew, the lion of the tribe of Judah; in Mark, the ox as the servant of Yahweh; in Luke, the incarnate human Jesus; and in John, the eagle as the divine Son of God. Another alternative is that the four living creatures are angels (cf. Isa. 6:2–3), who extol the attributes of God.<sup>1</sup>

- 8. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say,  
“HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *IS* THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.”**

It appears as if these four living creatures have one job, which is to give God praise (“day and night they do not cease to say, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come”). The prophet Isaiah seeing the throne room of God saw a similar vision in Isaiah 6:1-3.

**1.** In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. **2.** Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. **3.** And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.”

Ezekiel chapter 1

- 9. And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10. the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11. “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”**

Verse eight tells us that “day and night they do not cease to say...”, this means that the creatures are continually giving praise. Take note that every time the living creatures give glory and honor

<sup>1</sup> Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 944–945). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, the twenty four elders will fall down before the throne and cast their crowns before the throne. This would mean that the elders are also night and day not ceasing to praise God. This is a reflection of the human condition in heaven. Once we see God in all His glory and splendor, we will realize as Isaiah did how retched we truly are. For we will in that moment come face to face with the God of creation.