



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Chapter Four

- **The One on the throne.**
- **The twenty four elders.**
- **The seven spirits of God.**
- **The four living ones.**
- **The sea of glass.**

Isaiah's Vision

Isaiah 6:1 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." 4 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. 5 Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. 7 He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven."

Ezekiel's Vision

Ezekiel 1:1 Now it came about in the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. **2** (On the fifth of the month in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, **3** the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the Lord came upon him.) **4** As I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire. **5** *Within it there were figures resembling four living beings.* And this was their appearance: they had human form. **6** Each of them had four faces and four wings.

Ezekiel's Vision

Ezekiel 1:7 Their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and they gleamed like burnished bronze. 8 Under their wings on their four sides were human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them, 9 their wings touched one another; their faces did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward. 10 As for the form of their faces, each had the face of a man; all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle. 11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another being, and two covering their bodies. 12 And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go, without turning as they went. 13 In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was flashing from the fire. 14 And the living beings ran to and fro like bolts of lightning.

Ezekiel's Vision

Ezekiel 1:15 Now as I looked at the living beings, behold, *there was one wheel on the earth beside the living beings, for each of the four of them.* **16** The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship was like sparkling beryl, and all four of them had the same form, their appearance and workmanship being as if one wheel were within another. **17** Whenever they moved, they moved in any of their four directions without turning as they moved. **18** As for their rims they were lofty and awesome, and the rims of all four of them were full of eyes round about. **19** Whenever the living beings moved, the wheels moved with them. And whenever the living beings rose from the earth, the wheels rose also. **20** Wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go in that direction. And the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels. **21** Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still. And whenever those rose from the earth, the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels.

Ezekiel's Vision

Ezekiel 1:22 Now over the heads of the living beings there was something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, spread out over their heads. **23** Under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward the other; each one also had two wings covering its body on the one side and on the other. **24** I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings. **25** And there came a voice from above the expanse that was over their heads; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.

Ezekiel's Vision

Ezekiel 1:26 Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. **27** Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. **28** As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

Paul's Vision

2nd Cor 12:1 Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows— 4 was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. 5 On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses. 6 For if I do wish to boast I will not be foolish, for I will be speaking the truth; but I refrain from this, so that no one will credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me.

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- **I read all of those scriptures just to set the stage for what we will see and hear in Revelation chapters 4 & 5.**
- **Whether the experience was Isaiah's, Ezekiel's, or Paul's one must come away with a sense of awe at the absolute sovereignty and wonder of the Living God.**
- **We do not have to know what all of the symbols mean to understand that they speak of an all-knowing, all-powerful, all present God who is way beyond our comprehension. (a grandiose way of describing the indescribable)**

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Rev 4:1 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.” **2** Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. **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. **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.

Chapter Four

- **Rev 1:19 Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. (the outline for the book)**
- **I believe that beginning in Chapter 4 all of the events are future ones and prophetic.**
- **Not only does the 1:19 outline support that, but there are no other historical events like the ones described thereafter, thus further making the case for all of the events as future ones.**

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- “What will follow the church age? Evidently in some form or other the time of the tribulation. Why must the time of tribulation follow the church age? Because when the church has been withdrawn, while Satan, godless governments and Christless religions remain in the world there must be tribulation, and such a time of tribulation as the world has never known in the mixed state which has been from the beginning until now. From the fourth chapter through the nineteenth, speaking generally, there seems to be an account of this time of trouble.” C.A. Blanchard
- In other words, what else could we expect but great trouble when the Body of Christ is withdrawn from the world? (we are unappreciated salt and light)

Chapter Four

- **Rev 4:1** 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.”
- I find it very interesting that at the end of chapter #3 Jesus is positioned outside our closed doors knocking to get in, but the next thing John sees is that God’s door to His throne room is wide open for us to enter.
- Given the gap between who He is and who we are, shouldn’t it be the other way around?

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- **Two times in this verse John uses the phrase “after these things” – after what things? Perhaps he means after the church age. (further evidence for chapters 2 & 3 being an unfolding of different church ages)**
- **In fact, no less than 9 times in Revelation we read, “after these things” and each time it signals the start of a new vision.**
- **The reference to the “first voice I heard” may well be pointing back to the voice of Jesus in chapter 1 which he described as like the sound of a trumpet.**

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- The voice tells John, “Come up here” – a phrase that is also found in Rev 11:12 when a loud voice from Heaven calls the “two witnesses” back to Heaven.
- So when I read 1st Thessalonians chapter 4 and see - 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
- It seems reasonable to conclude that the shout just might be as simple as “come up here”.

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- **More evidence that the rapture is pre-trib is that aside from Rev 22:16, the church is not mentioned after chapter #3.**
- **And then there is this – in all seven letters to the churches we read, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”.**
- **In 13:9 we read - 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. (no mention of the church)**

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- **The setting in chapters 4 & 5 is the throne room of God. It is a place of absolute sovereignty far above the petty struggles of daily life in a sin cursed world.**
- **The scene is majestic and holy – it is one of honor for the One on the throne and a place where there is no question as to who is at the center of the universe. (no distractions here)**
- **There is a throne, thrones, four living beings, and twenty four elders – to John, the scene is surreal.**

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Chapter Four

- **The throne room is filled with dazzling color – red, emerald, bright whites, and others.**
- **“Most see the references to precious stones here (and in Eze. 28:1) as a description of brilliant colored lights which radiate from God and His throne (Eze. 1:26-28): “We need not find symbolism in each element of the vision; it is enough to allow the archetypical imagery to create the impression of transcendent glory.” (biblestudytools.com)**

Chapter Four

- **Verse #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.**
- **So who are the 24 elders sitting on the secondary thrones in the throne room?**
- **The text itself does not provide their identity, so I would not assume their identity is critical to the gospel or any other “need to know” doctrine.**

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- **There are three popular answers to who the 24 elders are, or at least who they represent.**
- **One view holds 1) they are representative of the saints of all ages, 2) they are some unknown order of angels, and 3) they are representative of the church.**
- **A clue perhaps is that they were all wearing garments of white, and crowns of gold (the victor's crown).**

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- Rev 3:6 He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels
- Rev 3:11 I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (a promise to the church)

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- So you might conclude, thinking chronologically, that since angels will not be judged until Rev 20, that the 24 are probably not angels.
- Likewise, since many O.T. saints were Jews, and Israel's judgment does not come until after the tribulation, these are probably not O.T. saints.
- That leaves us with just one possibility that is credible, the 24 elders are representatives of the church because after the Rapture *the believers of the church age will be judged, rewarded, and crowned.*

Questions