



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.**

Chapter Four

- 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; 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. 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. 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.” 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.”

Chapter Four

- Verse #5 And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Rev 1:4 To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne.
- Rev 3:1 “To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

Chapter Four

- **The seven spirits of God are not actually 7 separate entities, but, though we are not told specifically, they surely represent the Holy Spirit.**
- **The Holy Spirit is never manifested as an entity unto Himself, but always takes on some other form.**
- **At Jesus' baptism He descended like a dove, and at Pentecost He appeared as multiple tongues of fire.**

Chapter Four

- Why seven?
- Isaiah 11:2 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. 2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord— 3 and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.
- In addition, in you are into biblical numerology 7 is generally considered the number of perfection.

Chapter Four

- **The sea of glass - Verse #6 “and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal.”**
- **This was a base upon which the throne was set.**
- **There is not a lot said about this “sea of glass” so perhaps we should not assign any greater importance to it than the obvious – it, like the rest of the scene, was impressive!**

Chapter Four

- **The four living beings – they are cherubim. (the plural of cherub)**
- **How do we know they are cherubim? Because Ezekiel's vision and John's vision are surely the same creatures – and Ezekiel identifies them in chapter 10.**
- **Ezekiel 10:15 Then the cherubim rose up. They are the living beings that I saw by the river Chebar.**

Chapter Four

- **In Psalm 80 and Psalm 99 we find the cherubim associated with the power of God.**
- **Psalm 80:1 Please listen, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph's descendants like a flock. O God, enthroned above the cherubim, display your radiant glory 2 to Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh. Show us your mighty power. Come to rescue us!**
- **Psalm 99:1 The Lord is king! Let the nations tremble! He sits on his throne between the cherubim. Let the whole earth quake!**

Chapter Four

- **On top of the ark of the covenant there were two figures guarding the mercy seat – they were cherubim.**
- **They are always positioned close to the throne of God and are concerned with guarding His holiness.**
- **The (4) Living Ones around the throne were once (5).**

Chapter Four

- Ezekiel 28:11 Again the word of the Lord came to me saying, 12 “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 “You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. 14 “You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

Chapter Four

- **“You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you. 16 “By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, that they may see you. 18 “By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; it has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you. “All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have become terrified and you will cease to be forever.”**

Chapter Four

- **Lucifer was the 5th cherub who, sometime in eternity past, rebelled against God.**
- **Isaiah 14:12 “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, (Lucifer) son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! 13 “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ 15 “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit. 16 “Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you, saying, ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, 17 who made the world like a wilderness and overthrew its cities, who did not allow his prisoners to go home?**

Chapter Four

- **In the O.T. God is seen as dwelling between the cherubim.**
- **Isaiah 37:16 “The One who dwells between the cherubim.”**
- **Exodus 25:22 “There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.”**

Chapter Four

- These “Living Ones”, or cherubim, seem to be a higher order of angel in that they are distinguished from the “angels” in Revelation chapter 7.
- Rev 7:11 “And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God.”
- In addition, they, unlike the other more common angels are said to have “eyes everywhere”.

Chapter Four

- **The purpose of the “eyes everywhere” is probably an indication of their very specialized place and duty around the throne of God.**
- **The cherubim have the responsibility of guarding the holiness of God and access to the throne of God.**
- **They are the inner circle so to speak – maybe there is a comparison to make between Lucifer and Judas?**

Chapter Four

- The Living Ones are also involved in carrying out God's judgments on the earth.
- Rev 6:1 Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." 2 I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. 3 When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." 4 And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.
- See also Revelation 15:7 where one of the four living beings is similarly involved in judgment.

Chapter Four

- **Ezekiel's vision in chapters 1 and 10 and John's vision in Revelation chapter 4 are not word for word, but the descriptions of what Ezekiel and John saw are striking.**
- **The descriptions are so similar that the connection is hard to miss – they both claim to see God in His holiness and there are many, many similarities.**
- **Enough to safely say that they were both describing the same things.**

Chapter Four

- **Not to missed in these visions of God in His holiness is the common denominator of utter fear, wonder, and a sense of our own sinfulness.**
- **Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John (Rev Chapter 1) all fall on their faces as if to say, “have mercy on me a sinner”.**
- **A far cry from those who presume to revere God while calling Him “the man upstairs”.**

Chapter Four

- **The 24 elders fall down and worship- this seems to be the only normal, rationale response to the holiness of God.**
- **These 24 then lay their crowns before the throne and confess that though they were given a crown, the crowns are only theirs because of the One on the throne.**
- **I suspect we will do likewise after the Beam Seat.**

Chapter Four

- **Whether it was Isaiah, Ezekiel, or John, when they see God for who He is, they fall down in a state of utter undoneness. (if there is such a word)**
- **The lesson is clear – when we see ourselves in His light we see our terrible selves for who we are and feel as though we should be consumed.**
- **While overwhelming, the remedy does not change – shift the focus to Him and begin to worship.**

Chapter Four

- **Rev 4:11 “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.” NASB**
- **Rev 4:11 “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” KJV**
- **“I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast! And when I run I feel his pleasure.” — Eric Liddell**

Chapter Four

- **Think about this – you exist today because God willed it to be and therefore wanted you to be.**
- **You were also created specifically for His pleasure.**
- **And related to the both of these facts is that you will never be completely content in life until you allow Him to mold you into exactly what He had in mind.**

Chapter Four

- “The purpose of God, especially as related to the Son of God is also spelled out in Phil 2:9-11 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. As if anticipating the ultimate consummation where all will recognize the exalted name of Jesus whether in heaven or hell, Revelation 4 reveals this intimate glimpse of heaven where all created beings join in a symphony of praise and give their honor and worship to the Almighty God.

Chapter Four

- **The worthiness of God to receive such praise is related to His sovereign right to rule as the One who sits upon the throne. The twenty-four elders bear witness to His majesty and glory, His holiness and power, and the eternity of the One “which was, and is, and is to come.” All creatures owe their very existence to Him as their Creator, “for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Chapter 4 is a fitting introduction to that which follows in the next chapter, where the glory of Christ as Redeemer, as the Lamb that was slain, is an added reason for praise. Wise is the soul who finds in the scriptures the revelation of a such a God and who bows now in this day of grace in faith and worship before the God whom he will serve in eternity.” John Walvoord**

Questions