

Revelation

(A Chapter-by-Chapter Overview of God's Picture Book)

Lesson #5: Revelation 4:1-11

Review

General Background

The author, John, under the direction of God, uses vivid, symbolic imagery to get the message across.

This writing is designed to be a vivid message to a hurting church not a hidden code for a few scholars.

This book was originally written to a hurting church undergoing great persecution.

The encouragement to be victorious (or an overcomer) is repeated throughout the book.

What We Observed in Chapter 1

Jesus is pictured in a glorified form. He is standing among seven golden lampstands representing seven churches.

What We Observed in Chapters 2 & 3

The one letter that begins in Revelation 1:4 becomes seven letters to seven churches in Asia. (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea)

The letters described the 'reality on the ground' in each church. Some contained commendations, some condemnation, and some a combination of both.

Major reminders...

It is important for Christians to understand the condition of their relationship with Christ.

Even in the midst of great tribulation victory is possible if we trust Christ and heed his message.

The rewards of this overcoming make the suffering worth it all.

Revelation 4:1-11 – The Throne in Heaven

Verse 1

This is the third 'door' described in Revelation so far.

Door of opportunity (Revelation 3:8)

Door of the heart (Revelation 3:20)

Door of revelation (Revelation 4:1)

The 'voice like a trumpet' refers back to Revelation 1:10.

Verse 2

'In the Spirit' – Christians live between the physical and spiritual realms, both equally real. (2 Kings 6:16-17; Ephesians 6:12)

'Throne in heaven' -This same imagery is seen in Isaiah 6:1, Daniel 7:9, and 1 Kings 22:19

Verse 3

'Jasper, Ruby, Rainbow (Emerald)' – Pictures the incomparable grandeur of God.

Verse 4

'24 elders' – There is no Old Testament counterpart for these 24 elders. Many commentators believe that they represent the 12 tribes of the Israel from the OT and the original 12 apostles of the New Testament.

Bottom line – these are individuals of authority in service of God.

Verse 5

'Lightning and thunder' – Bright images and loud sounds point to God.

'Seven spirits of God' – Sevenfold spirit of God. (Isaiah 11:2)

Verses 6-8a

'Sea of glass' – More bright imagery pointing to God.

'Four creatures' – similarities and differences to the 'creatures' described in Ezekiel 1.

Ezekiel 1 – Each of the four faces featured human, lion, ox, and eagle.

Revelation 4 – Four different faces (lion, ox, man, and eagle)

Ezekiel 1 – Each had four wings.

Revelation 4 – Each had six wings.

Revelation 4 – Each creature was 'covered with eyes'

Instead of asking "What is the identity of the 4 creatures and 24 elders?", ask "What is the purpose of the 4 creatures and 24 elders?"

Verse 8b

The purpose of the four creatures was to _____ the One on the throne.

Verses 9-11

The purpose of the 24 elders was to _____ the One on the throne.

Lessons/Observations

There exists a spiritual realm that is just a _____L as the physical realm.

All _____ bows before God.

All _____ bows before God.