

# 1 A Season in Revelation with Dr. Paige Patterson

## 2 Session 8

- Wednesday, May 27, 2015
- Revelation 4:1-11
- The Scene in Heaven (Throne Room)

## 3 Quick Review

- What type of literature is Revelation?
  - Apocalyptic
- What makes it different?
  - Highly symbolic, difficult to interpret, a divine being acts as intermediary between God and man.
- Who wrote Revelation?
  - John the Apostle

## 4 Quick Review

- How many chapters are in Revelation?
  - 22
- How is the book ordered?
  - Chapter 1-3 - past historical
  - Chapters 4-22 - Futuristic

## 5 Quick Review

- What are the four primary interpretations of Revelation?
  - Preterist - all fulfilled at the time of writing.
  - Historicism - panorama of church history from John's time to the second coming of Christ.
  - Idealistic - depicts the cosmic struggle of good and evil while forecasting the triumph of God's purpose.
  - Futuristic - chapters 4-22 focus entirely on the eschaton (future and end times)

## 6 Quick Review

- What is the key to understanding the book?
  - 1:19 - Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later."

## 7

## 8 Quick Review

- John's Greeting - 1:4-8
- Vision of Christ - 1:9-20
- 7 Churches - 2:1-3:22
- The Throne in Heaven - 4

## 9 4:1-3

- 1 After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. 3 And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

**10**  **4:4-6**

- 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

**11**  **4:6-8**

- 6 And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

**12**  **4:9-11**

- 9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
  - 11 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

**13**  **4:1**

- After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”
- Can this verse be used as evidence for the pre tribulation rapture of the church?
- The Latin word rapture refers to the taking away of every true believer at the time of the parousia or coming of Christ. Pretribulation premillennialists who believe that this event takes place prior to the tribulation, see in this visionary transfer of John from earth to heaven an indication of the rapture of the church.

**14** 

**15**  **4:1**

- Dr. Patterson - At most, 4:1 may be seen as John’s personal visionary experience of what will happen to the church when the Lord returns.

- To read more than that into the verse would be to miss the point intended here, namely, that John is transported in his vision from the island of Patmos and the things of the churches into the presence of the heavenly throne room so that he can be prepared for the unfolding of the events that will transpire on earth during the great tribulation.

#### 16 4:1

- John is caught up in vision to heaven at 4:1 and remains there until the end of chapter nine.
- In chapter ten he has returned to earth, for he sees an angel “coming down from heaven”, and he remains on earth until 11:13; but in 11:15-19, the scene is again in heaven.

#### 17 4:2-4

- 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. 3 And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.

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#### 19 4:2-4

- Most commentators believe the expression, *en pneumatē* suggests that John was in an ecstatic trance.
- While this is possible, even probable, the first use of the expression in 1:10 may mean no more than that John, when the events unfolded, was seeking God through worship.
- The same is possible here, though without question what follows has much in common with Paul’s experience recorded by the apostle in 2 Cor 12:1–6.
- Paul confessed that he was unable to delineate his exact state, in or out of the body. John’s situation seems similar.

#### 20

#### 21 4:2-4

- *θρόνος* (“throne”) as God’s throne occurs 17 times in chs. 4–5 (of 38 occurrences in chs. 4–22).
- The high frequency in chs. 4–5 emphasizes that, although God’s realm is separated from the earthly, he is nevertheless in control over earth’s affairs.
- Regardless of how rampant evil seems to run and to cause God’s people to suffer, they can know that his hand superintends everything for their good and his glory. This is demonstrated by the fact that all the judgments in chs. 6–16 issue from God’s throne (e.g., 6:1–8, 16; 8:3–6; 16:17).

#### 22 4:2-4

- appearance of Jasper...carnelian...rainbow..

- At this point the apostle made no attempt to describe the facial features or other physical attributes of the figure but contented himself with saying that he had the appearance of jasper and carnelian.

#### 23 4:2-4

- Some commentators have attempted to assign significance to the two stones, such as, for example, the blood-red carnelian as representing judgment.
- While that might be the case, John himself draws no such distinction from the description, and this conclusion is not necessary to carry the effect of the vision.
- If one assumes the jasper is a reference to the diamond, what John saw seated on the throne would be a rather spectacularly beautiful contrast between the sparkling clear diamond on the one hand and the blood-red carnelian on the other.

#### 24

#### 25 4:2-4

- 24 Elders...
  - Attempts to identify the elders have fallen into two broad categories, one saying that they are men and the other that they are angels.
  - Each category has three variations, the former one saying that the men are either representatives of Israel, representatives of the church, or representatives of both. The latter category sees the angels as representatives either of the OT priestly orders or of the faithful of all ages, or as a special class or college of angels.

#### 26

#### 27 4:2-4

- 24 Elders...(Beale)
  - Now a heavenly entourage around the throne is pictured. The elders have been variously identified as (1) stars (from an astrological background), (2) angels, (3) OT saints, (4) angelic, heavenly representatives of all saints, (5) patriarchs and apostles representing the OT and NT saints together, and (6) representatives of the prophetic revelation of the twenty-four books of the Old Testament.

#### 28 4:2-4

- Dr. Patterson - Anticipating the explanation of chap. 5, I do not believe an angelic identification of the 24 elders carries a high degree of probability.
- Knowing of no case in which angels are presented as elders or wear victor's crowns, as well as for additional reasons presented in the following section, these elders must in some way represent redeemed and glorified humans. As will be noted, this also best explains the nature of their song.

#### 29 4:5

- 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

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31  4:5

- Thunder/Lightning - John views the sparkling throne and the throne's awe-inspiring occupant; he also sees and hears the phenomenon of a magnificent thunderstorm minus the actual physical phenomena normally accompanying it, such as clouds, rain, and hail.
- The spectacular vision is designed to impress John and his readers with the irresistibility of heaven's power.

32  4:5

- Seven lamps - These are to be distinguished from the lamps as they reflected the churches in chaps. 2 and 3 but are like the seven spirits of 1:4 and indeed according to the text are the seven spirits or the Holy Spirit presented in his fullness to the churches.
  - Conceivably the seven lamps of v. 5 are to be considered the seven churches now in their heavenly abode and still possessing the fullness of the Spirit. Whatever the case, the Spirit is clearly in view.

33 

34  4:5

- Sea - Finally, before the throne there spreads an enormous expanse of what appeared to John to be a sea of glass like crystal.
  - Here the word "sea" almost certainly has no reference to the undulation of the wave action but simply to the vast expanse. As far as he could see, this crystalline sparkling glass sea spread before the throne. This is likely identical with the "sea of glass mixed with fire," referenced again by John in 15:2.

35  4:6-9

- And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

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40  4:6-11

- This description is very similar to Ezekiel 1 & 10.
- This section also tells why the four living beings represent the whole of animate life. They are performing the function that all creation is meant to fulfill.

- That is, all things were created to praise God for his holiness and glorify him for his work of creation. 5:13 bears out that this is not only the ideal purpose for all creatures but also that someday this purpose will actually be fulfilled, not only in heaven but also on earth, since it is an anticipation of the consummation.

**41**  **4:6-11**

- Interpreters usually have evaluated this description as four segments of biological life: a lion representing untamed species, an ox representing domesticated animals, an eagle representing avian life, and man representing human life.
- Seemingly no place is allowed for the abundant life forms of the oceans; but, despite that, the interpretation is probably correct. The cherubim in some way represent all of God's created species.

**42**  **4:6-11**

- Notice the resemblances of cherubim between Ezekiel 1 & 10 and Revelation 4
  - Both are called "living ones."
  - They are the same in number - 4
  - The appearance is similar - man, lion, ox and eagle.

**43**  **4:6-11**

- They are both closely associated with the throne of God.
- Fire moves to and fro among them
- They are covered with eyes.
- The rainbow encircles the throne where they are.

**44**  **4:6-11**

- day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"
  - Quote from Isaiah 6:1-4 - 3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" These were called "Seraphim."

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**45**  **4:6-11**

- And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

**46**  **4:6-11**

- On every occasion their Holy, holy, holy is immediately followed by the song of the elders. It is the song of praise to the Father Creator.
- These elders symbolizing the entire host of the redeemed, fall down, in deep humility rendering divine homage; they worship, and cast their crowns of victory to the Lord on the throne.

**47**  **4:6-11**

- There song is one of creation. The sovereign will of God is the real and ultimate reason for the existence of all things. All creatures 'were,' that is, they existed ideally in the mind of God from eternity.
- They 'were created' that is, their real existence followed their ideal existence in the mind of God.

**48**  **Next Session, June 3rd**

- Next Week - Iron Sharpens Iron - Topic: God and Politics, A Better Way, Faith Influences Politics
- June 10th - Revelation 5, The Scroll and the Lamb