

Moving from the conditions within the churches in Asia to the future of the universal Church and believers, John sees the course of coming events in a way similar to Daniel and Ezekiel. Many of these passages contain clear spiritual teachings, but others seem beyond our ability to understand. Here, chapter 4 begins a transition in the vision of John, from the church age to the events surrounding the Tribulation. We covered the Rapture last week in our study. If we believe in a Pre-tribulation Rapture we would place that here.

Chapters 4 and 5 record glimpses into Christ's glory. Here we see into the throne room of Heaven. God the Father is sitting on the throne orchestrating all the events John is witnessing. Lets jump in.

In verse 1, John looks up to see a "door standing open in Heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this. At once I was in the Spirit, and before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.'"

John is in Heaven's _____.

John is hearing _____.

John is " _____ " in the Spirit. (Scholars translate this to mean he is having an open vision or that his spirit is present in heaven.)

What John saw: (vs. 3-11)

- 1) He sees “_____.” John sees the LORD and describes Him going into detail by using jewels. He sees what appear to be stones like jasper and sardius or carnelian (depending on what translation of the Bible you have). In the Old Testament in Exodus 28, the breastplate of the High Priest was covered with 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel. The first stone was a Sardius stone and the last stone was a Jasper stone. The Alpha and the Omega. The Beginning and the End.
- 2) He sees a “_____.” The rainbow has always been a sign of God’s covenant with Noah and the generations to come. (Genesis 9:12-16) The Emerald was the fourth stone set into High Priests chest plate. It represented the Tribe of Judah, Christ’s birth tribe by lineage of Joseph. (Matthew 1:1-16) According to Jewish tradition an Emerald was a sign of purity, fidelity and was oft used as a gift to wealth and royalty on weddings. Christ the bridegroom is in covenant with His bride the Church. Revelation 19:9 says, “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”
- 3) He sees “_____.” Most scholars believe the 24 elders to be the 12 sons of Jacob (the tribes of Israel) and the 12 apostles of Christ.
- 4) He sees “_____.” John sees the presence of the Holy Spirit or the 7 Spirits of God.

5) He sees “_____.” (see also Ezekiel 1:4-27)

The four living creatures had faces—a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle. Each has its own meaning:

- 1) The Lion—majesty and power
- 2) The Ox—faithfulness
- 3) The Man—intelligence
- 4) The Eagle—sovereignty

Finally, What John hears: Praise!

Verse 8-11 state,

“Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was, and is, and is to come.’ Whenever the four living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne and who lives forever and ever, the twenty four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship Him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being’”

All creatures in heaven and earth will praise and honor God because He is the Creator and Sustainer of everything!

Chapter 5 picks up where 4 left off. The Lamb is now going to become the Lion. In verse 5 we read that Jesus is the one worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals.

As the _____, Jesus symbolizes the perfect and final sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Christ the Lamb won the greatest battle of all. He defeated all the forces of evil by dying on the cross. John sees Jesus as the Lamb that was slain in the throne room. Christ's wounds inflicted on Him during the trial and crucifixion could still be seen. This lamb however also has 7 horns and 7 eyes. The horns represent his authority over the 7 Churches and the 7 eyes are the Holy Spirit described here as the 7 Spirits of God. (vs 5-6)

As the _____, Jesus symbolizes power and authority. Christ will lead the battle where Satan is finally defeated. Christ the Lion is victorious because of what Christ the Lamb has already done.

The _____ has an incredible significance to us: in Jewish law, property rights would be recorded by sealed and unsealed scrolls. The unsealed scrolls were kept for public record. The sealed scroll was rolled up and sealed with 7 seals and kept in the Temple chamber. Once the debtor came with proof of the deed, the priest could unseal the scroll. Jesus paid our debt with His sacrifice at Calvary. His body is the proof of debt paid. He is also the Priest that could unseal the scroll. (vs 7)

People from every tribe, nation, language, and tongue are praising God before His throne. (vs. 8) Their song is a song of redemption. The song itself speaks of Christ's work at the cross: (vs. 9-10)

- 1) He was slain
- 2) He purchased them with His blood
- 3) He gathered them into a Kingdom
- 4) He made them priests
- 5) He appointed them to reign on earth

The remaining verses are the praises of the saints and angels worshipping the worthy one.