

The Scene in Heaven (Part 1)

Revelation 4

Introduction: Revelation 4 begins the Third Major Section of Revelation – “That Which Shall Be in the Future” (chapters 4-22). In Revelation chapters 4-5, John is transported up to heaven, where he will be shown what takes place “after these things” (4:1). There he witnesses an incredible scene of worship offered by those surrounding the One on the throne, undoubtedly God the Father. In Revelation 5 the focus of worship shifts from God the Father to God the Son, for He is the only one worthy to open up a seven-sealed book of judgments which are about to commence upon the entire earth.

A. The Invitation of John up to Heaven. 4:1

1. What did John see? _____
2. What did John hear? _____
3. What invitation was John offered? _____¹
4. What was the speaker going to show John? _____

B. The Worship around the Throne of God, the Creator. 4:2-11

1. How was John transported ² to heaven? 4:2 _____
2. What did he observe there? _____
3. What was the appearance of the One sitting upon the throne? _____
_____ 4:3
4. What beauty surrounded the throne? 4:3 _____

¹ 4:1 - It is my belief that Christ's summons of John to heaven symbolizes Christ's future summons of the Church to heaven prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation. A pre-Tribulation Rapture does not stand or fall on this particular point, however.

² 4:2 - transported: John probably did not physically rise up to heaven. He was carried by the Spirit in a vision up to heaven. Today we would call it a virtual trip of the highest order of special effects.

5. Situated around the central throne were 24 other thrones. 4:4
 - a. Who was seated upon them? _____³
 - b. How were they clothed? _____. This suggests what about their character? (See Rev. 3:4-5; 19:8, 14)
 - c. What were on their heads? _____? What do these objects suggest? (Rev. 6:2; 14:14; 19:12) _____
6. What audio-visual effects were emitted from the main throne? 4:5 _____
7. What were burning before the throne? 4:5 _____
What did they symbolize? _____⁴
8. What was in front of the throne? 4:6 _____⁵
9. There were four created, living beings stationed around the throne 4:6-8.⁶
What is unique about their eyes? _____^{4:6}
10. Describe the appearance of each creature. 4:7
 - a. The 1st: _____
 - b. The 2nd: _____
 - c. The 3rd: _____
 - d. The 4th: _____

³ 4:4 - It is my belief that the 24 elders are men, not angels, and that 12 represent the redeemed nation of Israel and 12 represent the Church. Note that in New Jerusalem (Rev. 21), both Israel and the Church make their home in the city, while Gentiles on New Earth have round-the-clock access to the city.

⁴ 4:5 - The seven spirits of God may refer to the "seven principal angels of God, cf. 1:4; 3:1" (Thomas Constable, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/revelation.pdf> p. 55, 2010 edition).

⁵ 4:6 - The glass-like sea may signify the purity needed to approach God. Cf. the laver before the altar of burnt offering (1 Kings 7:23) (so Constable).

⁶ 4:6-8 - Living creatures: It is my belief that these four living creatures represent either a high order of angels or an exceedingly high, intelligent class of animals unknown on earth. If neither of these is true, then they belong to a class of exalted beings unknown anywhere else but in heaven.

11. What was unique about their wings? 4:8 _____

12. These four beings praise God constantly! 4:8 How do they praise...
- a. His separateness from evil? _____
 - b. His power? _____
 - c. His eternity? _____
13. When the four living beings worship God (4:9), what do the 24 elders do? 4:10
- a. Describe their humility: _____
 - b. Describe their worship: _____
 - c. Describe their submission: _____
14. The content of the four elders' praise. 4:11
- a. How do they describe God's praiseworthiness? " _____
_____ "
 - b. What three categories of praise do they say God is worthy to receive?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - c. For what reason, do they say, is God worthy to receive praise? _____

 - d. Why, do they say, that all things exist? _____
_____ ⁷

⁷ 4:11 - God's will: By God's will is meant (1) God's desire to act; (2) God's determination to act; and (3) God's action (exertion of effort) to accomplish that which he desired and determined.

15. If you were John, how would you feel, having been caught up into this heavenly assembly?

16. What most impresses you about this heavenly scene?

17. What adjustments do you need to make to prepare yourself for participating in this heavenly worship?