

The Book of Revelation is God's 'recap' to us of His ultimate plan and purpose for all time and eternity... that He would glorify Himself, before... and through, all angels, all humans and all creation.

In Chaps 2-3 ... even through all the negatives of 2000 years of Church history, He still will have kept and preserved for Himself a special people, always a remnant... those He will have called out from every tribe, language and family group of the World. Just like in 1 Kings 19:18... God tells Elijah... 'Yet I have reserved for Myself, 7000 in Israel, who have not bowed to Baal.'

At the end of each letter He tells us some of the ways He will glorify Himself through glorifying us. He is telling of how He will glorify Himself by **keeping, preserving and ultimately glorifying us**... the Bride of Christ.

Through the following 16 Chapters, He tells us how He is going to complete His dealings with Israel... as He had previously prophesied to Daniel and many other prophets. Even with all the negatives and impossibilities of Israel's history over the past 4000 years, He still will have done it... by Himself... for Himself... all to Glorify Himself.

All of us... everything was created for God's glory.

At the end of Revelation He tells us how He will complete His Justice concerning Satan, all the fallen angels and all the humans who've rejected Him throughout history.

Here's a secret... a mystery... He didn't just choose Israel out of the nations... He didn't just choose us out of the peoples... He created Israel from nothing as His special possession apart from all the nations of the Earth... He planned, chose and created us, the Church, each one of us, as His special love gift to His Son... His Bride.

Revelation is all about God doing and finishing what He planned, began and promised to complete.

Satan's plan is to convince people that the Book of Revelation is just spiritual, metaphorical, too hard to understand... riddles... that there is no real return of Jesus Christ, no Rapture, no Tribulation, no Second Coming, no Millennium and no restoration of Israel. If men can be convinced of any of that... if God didn't really mean what He said... If He's going to fail in fulfilling even one of His promises to Israel or the Church... then He can't be trusted to fulfill any of His promises.

That was Satan's original temptation of Eve and it has always been the same... ***'Has God really said...? Did He really mean it? Don't you realize you can be like God and decide for yourself what He really meant!'***

Now we begin the third division of the Book of Revelation.

Jesus told John to write in a book:

1. the things **which he saw**... the Glorified Lord Jesus Christ in Chapter 1
2. the things **which are**... a prophetic fore-view of the time of the Church on Earth in Chapters 2-3... and...
3. the things **which will take place after this**... after the time of the Church on Earth... that is... the rest of Revelation, the bulk of which comprises the 7 years of the Tribulation which is also the final, **70th week of Daniel** from Daniel chapter 9.

In Revelation chapters 4 and 5 we go from Earth to Heaven and see what John sees and hears... this is just before the action of the Tribulation begins. These 2 chapters are an interval before the Tribulation of God's Wrath and Justice... poured out on the World that has rejected and hated Him, His Son and His children.

We'll read chapter 4... it's short, only 11 verses... and then we'll go aback a examine a few things:

1. We'll see **John taken up into Heaven** which is a type for the **Rapture** of the Church...
2. We'll look at the **Throne Room of God** and how it corresponds to the Tabernacle and Temple on Earth...
3. We'll look at the **Four Living Creatures**...
4. And we'll look at the **24 Elders** who are an important proof of the Rapture and that the Believers' Judgment for Rewards has taken place by the time we see them here.

### Up into The Throne Room of Heaven

**Rev. 4** 'After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

<sup>2</sup> Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, **a throne set in heaven**, and *One* sat on the throne. <sup>3</sup> And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was a rainbow* around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. <sup>4</sup> Around the throne *were twenty-four thrones*, and **on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders** sitting, clothed in white robes; and **they had crowns of gold on their heads**. <sup>5</sup> And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. **Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne**, which are the seven Spirits of God.

<sup>6</sup> Before the throne *there was a sea of glass*, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were four living creatures* full of eyes in front and in back. <sup>7</sup> The first living creature *was* like a **lion**, the second living creature like a **calf**, the third living creature had a face like a **man**, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying **eagle**. <sup>8</sup> *The four living creatures*, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,  
Who was and is and is to come!"

<sup>9</sup> Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

"You are worthy, O Lord,  
To receive glory and honor and power;  
For You created all things,  
And by Your will they exist and were created."

At the beginning of Chapter 4 we see John *Raptured* into Heaven... he sees an open door in Heaven and hears the voice of Jesus Christ telling him to '**Come up here!**' and immediately he is in Heaven. This is a picture of the Rapture ... here... because this is where it happens... at the end of the time of the Church on the Earth... and just before the events of the Tribulation... the Rapture occurs at the beginning of Chapter 4... at the close of the time of the Church on the Earth.

Paul describes the Rapture in I Thes 4:16... 'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven **with a shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and with the **trumpet of God**. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.'

John, being taken up here corresponds to Paul's description. John is **called up by the voice of Jesus Christ**. At the Rapture we will be called up by the **shout of Jesus Christ**... John says that the voice he heard was **like a trumpet**. At the Rapture we will hear the **call of the Trumpet of God**.

John is taken to the God's Throne Room where He sees God Himself sitting on His throne. This is like what Ezekiel saw... Ezek. 1:26: 'And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. <sup>27</sup> Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. <sup>28</sup> Like the appearance of a **rainbow** in a cloud on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.'

John and Ezekiel both see God on His throne. His brightness and Glory are such that they can only describe it as being like shining radiant colorful gemstones... but they don't clearly see or discern God... as if He is hidden by the brightness of His Glory... and they both see a rainbow around God's throne.

What John sees here is not God's throne of grace... which believers are commanded to approach boldly for help in time of need... Heb 4... that time has now passed (chap 4)... all the Church, true believers, have been removed from the World in the Rapture... this is now God's throne of judgment as evidenced by lightnings, thunderings and voices. It will now be the throne of **judgment of rewards** of God's people.

John and Ezekiel, Isaiah and Daniel are all seeing the same thing but **in different places**. They are seeing the Throne Room of God. **John and Paul were both taken up to Heaven into God's Throne Room**. Ezekiel saw a vision of it **on the Earth** and Daniel was given a **vision of it from the Earth** just prior to when John sees it.

God told Moses exactly how He wanted the Tabernacle in the desert, the 'portable Temple'... to be constructed and **exactly** how He wanted the 12 Tribes arranged around it and He gave **exact** specifications for the Temple Solomon built. Why was it so important to God that they be exact?

The Tabernacle and the Temple were given by God as a picture, **a copy of His Own Throne Room** in Heaven... but His Throne Room was not just in Heaven... it was also portable... moveable... yes, God is everywhere, but He also positions Himself *somewhere*. In Ezekiel's vision, God's Throne Room was brought down to Earth to engage Ezekiel.

Ezekiel saw much the same as John did... they saw **God on His throne**, radiant, **shining like jewels**, they **saw 4 living creatures** with multiple wings and many eyes all around... the creatures looked like or had the faces of 4 different beings... an **eagle**, an **ox**, a **lion** and a **man**... John and Daniel both saw other **thrones arranged** around God's Throne though **they were empty when Daniel saw them** and **later filled when John saw them**... they both saw a **rainbow**... they both saw a **glass-like sea, or firmament**...

Look at what else Ezekiel saw regarding the Living Creatures that John didn't... Ezek 1:16: 'The appearance of their *workings* was, as it were, **a wheel within a wheel**. <sup>17</sup> When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. <sup>18</sup> As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims *were* full of eyes, all around the four of them. <sup>19</sup> When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. <sup>20</sup> Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels.

God allows Ezekiel to see this strange scene because it indicates that these creatures guard and accompany God's throne **wherever God determines for it to go**. Before Christ, before the Church... us... before God's Holy Spirit was inside redeemed men... when God wanted to commune with a man... He went to the man... either

in the Tabernacle or the Temple or in a vision. When Ezekiel or Isaiah or another saw a vision of God... they weren't seeing something made up or an idea... God was opening their eyes **to see what was really there.** (Remember When Elisha told his servant not to worry...2Kings 6:16: So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them." <sup>17</sup> And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.) They were seeing what was actually there... not a mirage.

Ezekiel is seeing that God had actually brought His Throne Room to where he was... that is why the wheels... to indicate movement and direction and portability.

In the Tabernacle and Temple, God was having them build exact representations of His Throne Room to which He would go to meet with man and He demanded it to be perfectly to His exact specifications. He was melding the Spiritual with the Physical.

In the Heavenly Throne Room, there is **God's Throne**, surrounded by **4 living creatures**, reminiscent of an **eagle**, an **ox**, a **lion** and a **man**. In front of the Throne are **7 burning lampstands** representing the Holy Spirit of God in all His completeness. In front of that is the **Golden altar**. In Front of that is a **sea like glass or crystal**... then the outer court and finally the **sacrificial altar**.

In the Desert Tabernacle you have the most holy place wherein is the **Ark of the Covenant** (Throne of God) guarded by two golden cherubim (Living Creatures)... then the holy place with the golden altar of incense and the 7 branched lampstand (7 Spirits of God). See how it is a copy of God's Throne Room in Heaven? Outside the doorway to the Outer Court, you have the bronze laver filled with water for cleansing (sea of glass) and the brazen altar for sacrifice. Surrounding the Tabernacle were the 12 tribes of Israel, **arranged exactly to represent the 4 living creatures**... on the North were 3 tribes, led by Dan whose standard bore the image of an **Eagle**. On the West were 3 tribes, led by Ephraim whose standard bore the image of an **Ox**. On the South were 3 tribes, led by Rueben whose standard bore the image of a **Man** and on the East were 3 tribes, led by Judah whose standard bore the image of a **Lion**. (God is duplicating His Own Throne Room on Earth)

When God chose to meet with man, once a year and only the High Priest could enter... They would both go into the Most Holy Place, behind a heavy curtain, to the Ark of the Covenant, which was God's Earthly Throne, within a Tabernacle built as closely as humans could, to represent His Heavenly Throne Room.

As Ezekiel saw... God would actually bring His Throne Room right down to where He planned to be. **(As if God would bring His Throne Room down and 'plug it in' to the exact replica He had commanded to be built.)**

The same is true of the temples He created for us to live within... our bodies. 'Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1Cor 6:19 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.' Rom 12:1

Our physical bodies represent the outer court... anything can come in... sight, sound, smell, taste, touch...

Our Souls represent the inner court and holy place... we have more control over what enters there... through thoughts, memories, imaginations... even a lost person can have a sense of the spiritual and interact with the spirit world...

But our Spirit... that is the most holy place... that is the only place where a man can meet with God... when one is born again, when God creates a new spirit in a man, one with His Own Spirit... then we can meet with God anytime, all the time, in the most holy place of our spirits... That is the Secret Place that God invites us

to... 'He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." Psa 91

The Tabernacle and Temple were pointing to what God would eventually do for us. Jesus, as our high priest would offer His Own blood upon the Sacrificial Altar in Heaven and He would tear down the curtain (our sin) that separated us from coming to God.

God demanded the earthly places of worship mirror the Heavenly one... just like He created our Earthly temples... our bodies... in the image of Himself.

***There is so much more to this that we should understand but don't yet... I'll keep working on it.***

Now back to verse 4: ' Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and ***they had crowns of gold on their heads.***

These elders are representative of Redeemed humanity... Israel and the Church. Since there are 24 of them, they are probably the same as the names on the foundations and gates of the New Jerusalem... representatives of the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 Apostles.

We know they are humans because they have crowns and thrones... only humans, redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ are promised crowns and thrones...

'You who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' Matt 19:28...

'To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.' Rev 3:21...

'And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them.' Rev 20:4...

'Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.' Rev 2:10...

'And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.' 1 Pet 5:2

'There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness.' 2 Tim 4:8

The Elders have been redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ as we'll see from their song in the next chapter.

Rev 5:9... And they sang a new song, saying:

"You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,  
And have ***redeemed us to God by Your blood***  
***Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,***  
***And have made us kings and priests to our God;***  
***And we shall reign on the earth."***

***They have crowns*** and they ***have been given thrones... meaning they have passed through the Believers' Judgment of Works and have received their reward.***

Daniel saw the thrones arranged, but no one sitting on them yet... Dan 7:9

"I watched ***till thrones were put in place,***  
And the Ancient of Days was seated;

His garment *was* white as snow,  
And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool.  
His throne *was* a fiery flame,  
***Its wheels a burning fire;*** (like Ezekiel saw... wheels)  
***A fiery stream issued***  
***And came forth from before Him.*** (*the fire to test men's works for reward*)  
A thousand thousands ministered to Him;  
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.  
The court was seated,  
***And the books were opened.*** (Time for Judgment!)

Daniel sees what John sees, but just before the judgment of works of believers... right after the Rapture.

Each one standing before God has been redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb and each one is about to go through the stream of fire issuing from before the Throne.

'Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because ***it will be revealed by fire;*** and ***the fire will test each one's work,*** of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. If ***anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.***' 1 Cor 3:12 (this is a judgment of works... not of salvation.)

Each one's works will go through God's fire and be revealed for what it is...whether done for the Glory of God, or for the glory of self.

Perhaps these 24 Elders were at the front of the line because as John sees them, they have already been through the fire and their works have been approved to receive God's reward. They have been given crowns and they have been given thrones in the very Throne Room of God.

This judgment is a big deal, a planned event, a onetime thing... and all Heaven has been waiting for the Rapture to occur so that this Judgment can begin in Heaven while the Tribulation begins on Earth.

This will take a while for all of us to pass through God's Judgment of rewards through fire ...

The wedding of the Messiah, the wedding feast, the coronation of the King of Kings... all takes place about 14 chapters later toward the end of the Tribulation... not at the beginning. Jesus is busy here with judgment.

The idea of a 7 year wedding feast while the Tribulation is going on is not what the Word teaches us. There will be a lot of people going through this judgment... one at a time... from Adam, through all of us, until the Rapture... there will be a lot of rejoicing with rewards, but there will be a lot of pain with the loss of rewards...

Finally, a little more about the Four Living Creatures... they appear to always attend and accompany God and His Throne wherever He wants it to go. They are not humans and they are not angels because later we will see them differentiated from angels in Rev 5.

They command John to observe as the 4 horesmen are unleashed on the Earth. One hands the 7 bowls of wrath to the 7 angels.

John calls them living creatures.

Ezekiel calls them Cherubim

Isaiah calls the Seraphim.

They might be the same... they might be similar but distinct.

God created these beings to attend Him and to praise and glorify Himself.

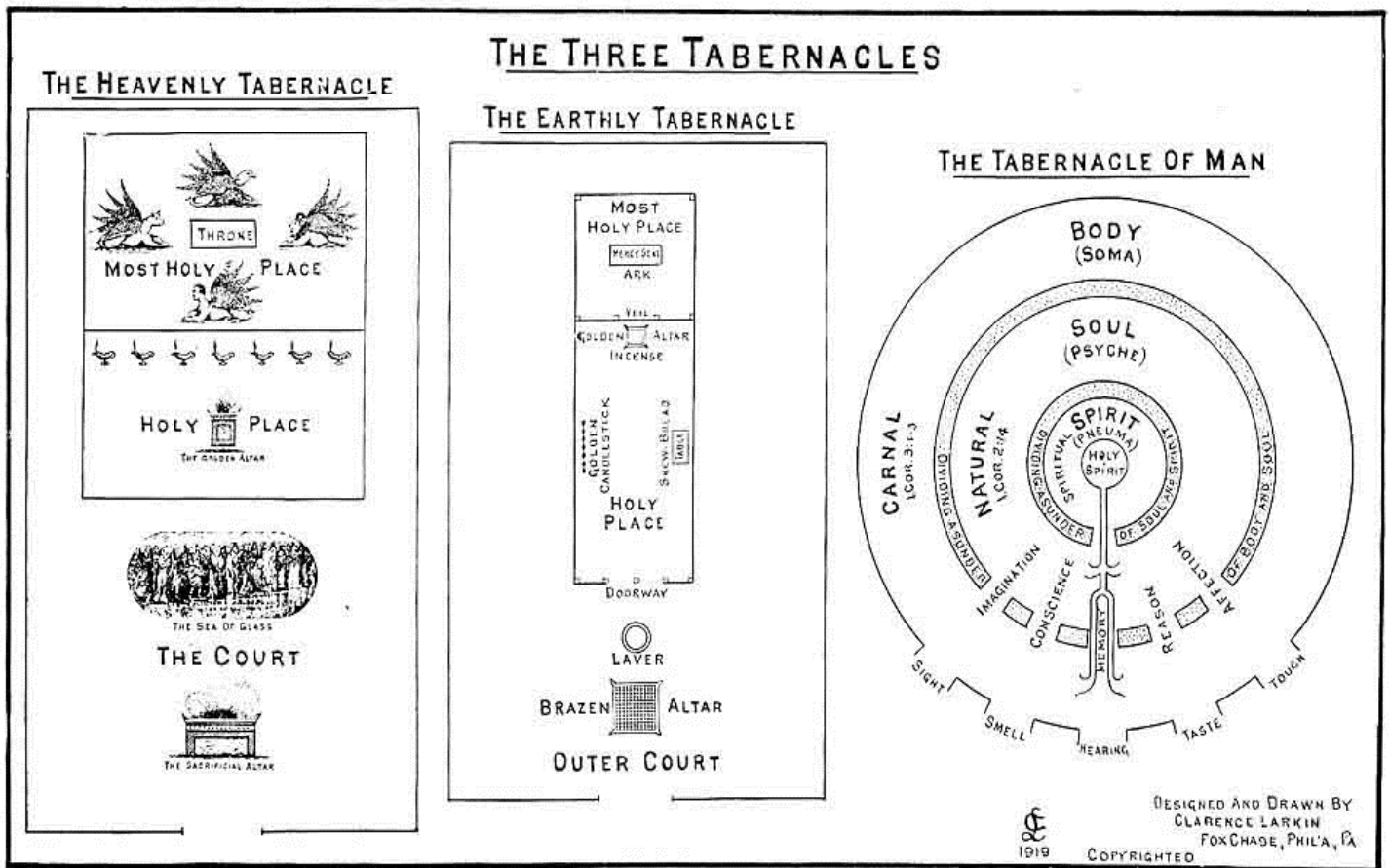
We've only been given a glimpse of their being and ministry. We'll learn much more one day very soon.

Think on this... God has created wise, powerful creatures... not humans... not angels... not earthly animals... yet they look like some earthly animals... they remind the prophets of an ox, an eagle, a lion... they speak... they command John. They have multitudinous eyes all around.

Once again I remind us... we have no idea of all that God has accomplished throughout His vast Universe of Creation... or of what He has planned for us to rule and reign over, or what He intends to give to us as our inheritance as fellow heirs with Jesus Christ and heirs of all things... we have no idea... we have no clue.

We must never limit God in our imaginations. Whatever we can imagine... His reality is far, far beyond...

Just imagine what God can imagine!



# The Camp of Israel

