

**First Baptist Church**  
**101 S. Wilmington Street**  
**Raleigh, North Carolina 27601**  
Dr. Dumas A. Harshaw, Jr., *Pastor*

May 18, 2022

***THE BOOK OF REVELATION***  
**The Glorious Throne**

**REVELATION 4:1-2**

**4:1 – 5:14: GOD AND CHRIST ARE GLORIFIED BECAUSE CHRIST’S RESURRECTION  
DEMONSTRATES THAT THEY ARE SOVEREIGN OVER CREATION TO JUDGE AND  
TO REDEEM**

(G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*)

---

The book now shifts from the seven churches in Asia to the future of the worldwide church. John saw the course of coming events similar to the way Daniel and Ezekiel had seen them. Many of these passages contain clear spiritual teachings, but others seem beyond our ability to understand. The clear teaching of this book is that God will defeat all evil in the end. Meanwhile, we must live in obedience to Jesus Christ, the coming Conqueror and Judge.

Revelation 4-5 provide glimpses into Christ’s glory. Chapter 4 is John’s vision into the throne room of heaven, and chapter 5 is John’s vision of the Lamb and the scroll. The events described in chapters 8 and 7 occur as the seals on the scroll are broken. Therefore, chapters 4-8 contain one continuous vision.

God is on the throne, orchestrating all the events that John recorded. The world is under his control, and he will carry out his plans as Christ initiates the final battle with the forces of evil.

After writing the letters to the seven churches, John looked and saw a door standing open in heaven. Ezekiel said, “The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God” (Ezekiel 1:1). It is God who opens the door, so this is God revealing these visions to John and to us. This first voice that sounded like a trumpet was

the voice of Christ (see 1:10-11). The voice spoke again and told John to “come up here.” From there, Christ would show John what must take place after this – that is, after the time of the letters to the churches in chapters 2 and 3. These would be visions of the end of the world and the beginning of Christ’s kingdom.

Some who subscribe to the pre- Tribulation theory see a veiled reference to the rapture of the church in the words of Christ to “come up.” But the text indicates that John alone was commanded to be transported in the Spirit to heaven. The Rapture is not mentioned specifically in the book of Revelation. For more on the Rapture, see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

Four times in the book of Revelation, John wrote that he was in the Spirit (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10). This expression means that the Holy Spirit was giving him a vision – showing him situations and events that he could not have seen with mere human eyesight. All true prophecy comes from God through the Holy Spirit (1:10; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

John saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it (compare with 1 Kings 22:19; Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:1). The throne of God is mentioned forty times in the book of Revelation. In Jewish mysticism God was pictured as ruling all of creation from a celestial throne, the throne symbolizes God’s absolute authority, for the first-century readers, the most powerful throne in the world would have been Caesar’s throne. Caesar sat on the most glorious throne in the world and had control of one-half of the gross national product of the Roman Empire. His glory and wealth, however, were nothing compared to God’s. God’s throne was as brilliant as gemstones, Jasper and carnelian were semiprecious stones. Caesar’s pomp and splendor were nothing compared to the glow of an emerald that circled God’s throne like a rainbow. The stones symbolize great wealth – God owns all the riches of the entire world. These gemstones were the most pure elements known at that time – and God transcends even these. John did not describe this person on the throne, other than to mention the brilliant light around him. God alone is sovereign; Caesar is not a god. Only God is God.

**The Message of Revelation**

**God's Sovereignty (5:1-14; 11:15-18; 20:1-22:21)**

**Christ's Return (19:11-16; 20:4-6; 21:1-7; 22:6-21)**

**God's Faithful People (14:1-5; 20:4-6; 21:3-4)**

**Judgment (6:10-17; 11:15-19; 15:1- 16:21; 18:1- 20:15)**

**Hope (1:3, 7-8; 2:7, 11, 17, 26-29; 3:8-13, 20-22; 4:1-11; 7:9-17; 14:13; 19:1-10; 20:4-6; 21:1-22:7; 22:17-21)**

(Life Application Bible Commentary)

**ADORATION IN THE COURT OF HEAVEN (4:1-5:14)**

The letter to the seven churches are now complete. For consolation and courage in the coming tribulation John is now swept up in the Spirit to the very door of heaven. There he beholds a vision of a sovereign God in full command of the course of human affairs as they move swiftly to their denouement. On the plane of history, the church appears unable to resist the might of hostile worldly powers, but the course of history is not determined by political power but by God enthroned and active. At his appointed time the scroll of destiny is to be handed to the Lamb, who himself will open the seals, bring history to a close, and usher in the eternal state. The great throne-room vision of chapters 4 and 5 serves to remind believers living in the shadow of impending persecution that an omnipotent and omniscient God is still in control. This vision, it should be emphasized, must be understood as in close relationship to the preceding letters to the churches, offering encouragement for their present and future struggle with the Empire, but also reminding them that they, too, are under his sovereignty.

(The Book of Revelation, Robert H. Mounce)

**4:1:** After these things I looked, and behold, a door  
 Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ θύρα

having been opening in heaven, and the first voice  
 ἠνεωγμένη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη

which I heard like a trumpet speaking with me saying,  
 ἦν ἤκουσα ὡς σάλπιγγος λαλούσης μετ' ἐμοῦ λέγων·

“Come up here, and I will show you what things must happen after these things.”  
 ἀνάβα ὧδε, καὶ δείξω σοι ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα.

**4:2:** Immediately I came to be in the Spirit  
 Εὐθέως ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι,

and behold, a throne was set in heaven and upon the throne one sitting,  
 καὶ ἰδοὺ θρόνος ἔκειτο ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον καθήμενος,

++++

*“Lectio Divina”*  
**Divine Reading**

**Study the verses, Revelation 4:1-2, in quietness, reflect and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you take inventory of your own faith walk.**

- 1. Read the entire passage and note words, sentences, and phrases that speak directly to your heart.**
- 2. Meditate on the verses and your own life journey. Imagine yourself going through the open door leading you to the throne room of Almighty God.**
- 3. What do you see? What do you hear? How does this make you feel? How can such a vision change the way you live your life moving forward?**
- 4. Contemplate worshipping in the presence of God. What message would you share to the world, the nation, the church, your family?**
- 5. For what should we be praying?**

Resources for this study:

*Life Application Bible Commentary*  
*Revelation*, Grant R. Osborne  
*Reading Revelation*, C. Marvin Pate  
*Revelation*, N.T. Wright

*Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Revelation*, Buist M. Fanning  
*Reading Revelation Responsibly*, Michael J. Gorman  
*Discovering Revelation*, David A. Silva  
*Revelation*, Mitchell G. Reddish  
*Revelation*, Amos Yong  
*The Book of Revelation*, Robert H. Mounce