

The Scene in Heaven

Revelation 4:1-4

I. Introduction:

A. Things future

1. Chapter 1 of the Book of Revelation tells what John saw.
2. Chapters 2 & 3 are the letters of Jesus to the seven churches of Asia Minor.
3. The 3rd section, chapters 4–22, contain the future events, after the church age.

B. Survey of things to come

1. – Rapture of the church

- a. The next prophetic event to take place is the rapture of the church.
- b. Paul's letters to the church at Corinth & the church at Thessalonica reveal the church age will end with the rapture.

2. – Tribulation

- a. After the rapture of the church the seven-year tribulation period will begin.
- b. First 3½ years under the antichrist will be relatively calm followed by 3½ years of terrible wickedness under the antichrist.

3. – The return of Jesus

- a. At the end of tribulation period (7 years) the battle of Armageddon will take place.
- b. Jesus will return to this earth as the King of kings and Lord of lords.
- c. Jesus will speak the command & the antichrist, the false prophet, & the beast will be cast into the eternal lake of fire. Satan will be cast into the pit for a thousand years.

4. – Millennial Kingdom

- a. After the battle of Armageddon, Jesus will establish his kingdom on this earth.
- b. Jesus will sit on David's throne & rule over world from Jerusalem for 1,000 years.
- c. It is during this kingdom age that all the promises to Abraham will be fulfilled.

5. – Final battle and judgment

- a. After the 1,000-year kingdom, Satan will be released from the pit for a season.
- b. Satan will lead one last rebellion against Jesus.
- c. Jesus will destroy all who follow Satan. Satan will be cast into eternal lake of fire.

6. – Great white throne judgment

- a. After the kingdom age will come the Great White Throne judgment.
- b. All lost people of human history will come before Jesus and be judged for their sin.
- c. Everyone who died in their sin will be judged and cast into the eternal lake of fire.

7. – New heaven, new earth, and new Jerusalem

- a. Jesus will then create a new universe, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem.
- b. The saved will spend eternity with their God in this sinless & perfect creation.
- c. The saved have an eternal home in the new Jerusalem.

II. John called up to heaven. (Revelation 4:1)

A. Open door in heaven

1. – Indicative of the rapture

- a. This is what happens when rapture occurs. Jesus calls His church out of this world.
- b. His voice is loud and authoritative, like that of a trumpet.

2. – Chronology is consistent.
 - a. The phrase “**after these things**” keeps w/ the Book’s division given in **Rev. 1:19.**
 - b. This is the 3rd section of the Book, the section that speaks to future events.
3. – Sovereign purpose of God
 - a. The revealing of future events shows us that God has a divine purpose.
 - b. Human history is not some haphazard collection of random events.
 - c. God is sovereignly moving this world forward according to His divine plan.
 - d. Application: align your life with God’s plan which begins with saving faith in Jesus.

III. The throne of heaven (Revelation 4:2-3)

A. One on the throne of heaven

1. As soon as John was lifted to heaven, he saw One sitting on the throne of heaven.
2. This one on the throne is none other than Jesus Christ.
3. Jesus is God which means the Father & the Holy Spirit are included. (**John 5:22-23**)
4. Jesus is the manifestation of God before whom all mankind will stand & give account.
5. Application: Jesus is Lord of all, thus be saved now while there’s an offer of grace.

B. Description (Revelation 4:3)

1. John describes Jesus in His glory as God using terms having to do w/ light & brilliance.
2. He describes brilliance of God’s glory in terms of light shining through precious gems.
3. Jasper – Most like a diamond. The pure light is like the pure glory of our Lord shining like light through a diamond.
4. Sardius – Is a red stone. There was a red color to the shining forth of our Lord’s glory.
5. Emerald Rainbow – Green. The rainbow is an eternal reminder of the promises of God.

IV. The twenty-four elders (Revelation 4:4)

A. The elders

These elders in heaven before tribulation are evidence for pre-tribulation church’s rapture.

1. – Elders
 - a. Word “**elders**” speaks to those who are representative of a family or group of people
 - b. In the Bible there were elders who represented a clan of people.
 - c. In the N. T. the church has elders who represent the church body as a whole.
2. – The number 24 (representative number in the Bible)
 - a. Priests of Israel were broken into 24 courses who served the people before God.
3. – On thrones
 - a. Jesus promised thrones to all those who forsake this world to follow Him.
 - b. The elders represent the church reigning with our Lord. (**2 Timothy 2:11-12**)
4. – Clothed in white robes (represent purity)
 - a. The saved in Jesus are made pure before God the Father by Jesus’ atoning work.
 - b. Positionally in Jesus we’re pure before the Father. Practically in this flesh we’re anything but pure. But at the rapture we will receive our new resurrection body.
 - c. That body will be perfect. That body will be sinless.
5. – Wearing crowns
 - a. The word is *stephanos* as opposed to *diadema*. *Stephanos* is a crown given as a reward. *Diadema* is a crown of royalty, the crown of a sovereign ruler.
 - b. Church will appear at Christ judgment seat & receive rewards, crowns, for faithful service in this life. Elders represent the church in heaven, pre-tribulation, having appeared before Christ judgment seat, and received their rewards.
 - c. Offered to Jesus: These elders will cast their crowns at the feet of Jesus in worship.