

Lesson: Revelation 4: 1-11

THE PICTURE OF THINGS HEREAFTER

The Throne of God: The Focal Point of History

Text:

Revelation 4:1-11

Introduction

- * This begins a new vision, the second great vision given to John the Apostle.
- * The Lord's personal message to the individual churches is now over.

The Lord has told them who He is, pointed out their failures, and warned and counseled them to correct their failures.

- * The Lord has also given them the great promises of Heaven if they will only overcome.
- * Now it is time for the churches to see the future events that are coming upon the earth.

Remember what was told to John:

Revelation 1: 19

"Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter"

- * **"The things which thou hast seen"** (the vision of the glorified Christ)
- * **"The things which are"** (the churches upon earth, their state and condition and the Lord's personal message to them)
- * **"The things which shall be hereafter"** (the future events that are to happen at the end of the world and throughout eternity)

2.

Now in Revelation 4: 1-we again read “I will shew thee things which must be hereafter”

Revelation 4:1-2 [KJV]

“1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne”

Background: John is given the vision:

- a. Sees an open door in heaven
- b. Hears a commanding voice
- c. He is called to **"Come up here":** To see things that must take place
- d. He is in the spirit at once / Immediately!
- e. John sees the astounding sight of God sitting upon His throne

John saw a door opened in heaven

- * What he was about to see was coming from heaven, from God Himself
- * The future events were not of his own imagination
- * They were to be of God, of the very Word of God itself

This means we can trust the events written down in Revelation. They will happen as recorded. It is the Word of God.

There are Three Doors mentioned in Revelation

[1] The first door is the open door for evangelism and missions

* This is the door that God opens to the churches for bearing witness to the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* It is the opportunity that God opens for them to carry the gospel to their neighbors, communities, cities, states, and countries and world—even to the uttermost part of the earth.

3.

Revelation 3: 8

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name"

Acts 1:8

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"

The first door: The door for evangelism and missions

2 The second door is the door of the human heart.

* When believers carry the message of the gospel to their neighbors, it is then up to the individual person to open the door of his heart and receive the gospel.

* The decision is the neighbor's

* Every person has a door that has to be opened before Christ will enter—the door of his heart.

Revelation 3: 20

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"

The second door was the door of the human heart

3 The Third is the door of revelation

* Once a person has opened the door of his heart to Christ, Christ *reveals the glorious things of Himself*, of God, of heaven, and of this world.

* In addition, Christ reveals some of the events that are to take place as history unfolds itself—some of the events that surround the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the end time.

Revelation 4: 1

"I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven"

4.

1 Corinthians 2:12-14

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"

John heard a commanding voice, *the very same voice he had heard in the first vision*

Revelation 1:10-11 (KJV)

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

John was called to come up here into heaven

* Note why! “Come up hither, and *I will shew thee things which must be hereafter*”

* The reason is clearly stated: *to see future events, things that must take place.*

The word *must* is a most important word.

- * The events of world history are not by chance.
- * They do not simply happen. They are of God, of His will—things that must happen.
- * God works them out.
- * They are according to His divine will.
- * God is sovereign.
- * He rules over the world.
- * History is in His hands and under His ultimate control.

5.

John was immediately in the spirit

* He was having a deep, intense spiritual experience with God; he was in the Holy Ghost power and taken up and above this earth into heaven.

John saw the most astounding sight imaginable

* God and the throne of God.

* John emphatically declares that He saw God sitting on the throne of God.

The picture being dramatized is this:

The throne in heaven, God's throne, is the throne above all thrones.

* It is the supreme seat of honor and majesty, of sovereignty and power.

* God is the supreme Majesty of the universe, the One who controls and holds all the events of history in His hands.

* He is the Supreme Authority over all the world and the coming events of the end time.

* No person can cause the events to take place but Him.

* The Lord Jesus Christ is returning to earth and the events of the end time are going to happen.

They are going to happen because of Him and because of Him alone.

* And note: the throne is "set in heaven"

* That is, the events are set forever

* God rules and reigns forever.

* There will never be an end to His rule.

* This is great security to the believer.

* God has promised to deliver and keep the believer from the hour of trial, the great tribulation.

Revelation 3:10

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth”

Revelation 4:2-3 (KJV)

“2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald”

John in the spirit saw the throne in heaven and God sitting on it!

*** God Described**

*** There is the sight of God sitting upon the great throne of God.**

Note an astounding thing

*** The appearance of the One on the throne is so glorious and majestic that He is indescribable.**

*** No human shape or form can describe Him.**

*** God is described in terms of light, the dazzling light of the most precious gems and jewels of that day.**

He is seen in all of His brilliance and dazzling splendor!

Psalm 104:1-5 KJV

“1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever”

Revelation 4:2-3 (KJV)

“2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald”

7.

The **jewels** chosen to describe God proclaim a marvelous message to the hearer.

- * They were considered the most brilliant and the most valued, precious, and desired gems on earth.
- * God is seen and described as the most brilliant and valued, precious, and desired Being—a Being of indescribable glory and splendor.

John was saying that the countenance of God shone like a **jasper stone**.

- * The stone referred to was different from the jasper stone of today.
- * The idea is that the stone was some sort of translucent crystal through which light was shining.
- * It was shining so brightly that it was apparently like the concentrated light of a laser.

This represents the penetrating perfection and purity of God

The **sardine stone** was a fiery red stone and it represents the justice of God.

The **rainbow** that surrounded the throne looked like **emerald green**.

This represents the mercy of God and the new covenant of grace given to man by God.

The promise of mercy made to Noah

Genesis 9:11-17 (KJV)

“And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

8.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth”

Note: The throne of God covers the whole scope of salvation

- * There is God in all of His perfection and purity.
- * And there is man who comes short of God's perfection and purity, short of God's glory.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)

- * There is God's justice and judgment. Man, being short of God's perfection and purity, cannot live with God.

God can allow only perfection into His presence

- * If He allowed sin and unrighteousness to live in His presence, they would contaminate heaven; heaven would no longer be heaven.

Therefore, God must execute judgment upon sin and unrighteousness.

- * There is God's mercy and grace.
- * God loves man; therefore, He sent His Son to bear the sins of man.
- * His Son actually took the sins of man upon Himself and bore the guilt of judgment against them.
- * Therefore, man can now be free of sin.
- * He can become acceptable to God if he will accept the sacrifice of Christ for his sins. God has had mercy upon man.

9.

All of this is seen in the throne of God, the whole scope of human history, of the glorious salvation God has planned for man.

Revelation 4:4 (KJV)

“4 And round about the throne were *four and twenty seats*: and upon the seats I saw *four and twenty elders sitting*, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold”

The Elders of Revelation: There is the sight of twenty-four elders sitting around the throne of God.

They are *seated* upon thrones that surround God's throne

- * This shows that they... are near God, being honored with His presence.
- * They are resting in God, being fulfilled, complete, and satisfied.
- * They are enthroned with God, that is, they are given a permanent place in His presence forever and ever.

They are *clothed* in white

- * This means that they are clothed in the purity and holiness of God and of Christ.
- * There is no imperfection in them at all

They have *crowns of gold* on their heads

- * This means that they hold positions of authority; that they are given some duty and responsibility to oversee for God; that they serve God by overseeing some rule and domain; and that others serve under them.
- * Simply stated, they rule and reign for God, serving Him by managing some vast rule and domain of the universe.

They are thought to be the *twelve patriarchs* and the *twelve apostles* combined—the heads of the believers, of the church of both the Old and New Testament.

- * That is, they are thought to be the heads and representatives of all the believers of both the Old and New Testament.
- * The reasons for holding this position are as follows:
The patriarchs' names are on the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem and the apostles' names are on the foundations.