



Citadel Of Faith Covenant Church

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ALPHA AND OMEGA

Just like a masterful cinematic experience, we once again get an apocalyptic (removing of that which obstructs) view of the happenings of heaven. Have you ever been somewhere and saw a door leading to somewhere with important people entering and exiting and wondered “what’s behind that door”. Well, this is the challenge of humanity as we look heavenward. “What does heaven look like?”. Once again, our gracious and ever giving Lord gives us a glimpse of His home. No longer the manger or “on the run” lodging of earth, but the splendor of heaven is unfolded to us. There are some key words which we find in Revelation chapters 4-7: *axios-worthy, deserving, fit*. Worthiness stands out as a major theme in chapters for and five. Another set of words: *doxa kai timē*, which means glory and honor. In the New Testament, glory and honor are the future reward for believers in Christ. (Rom 2:7, 10) Finally, *sphragis* which means seal or signet. This word appears only three times in the rest of the New Testament, but in Revelation it is used thirteen times. Seals indicated ownership and it would refer to the seal or mark placed on the remnant of Israel (7:2 & 9:4) Revelation 4 opens with John seeing an “open door” standing open in heaven. How appropriate seeing that chapter three ended with Jesus standing at the door knocking. Any ability to see the heavenly must come through a means. We can’t get to heaven on our own merit, but by invitation only. Look at verse 1b, “Come up here...”. We never experience the things of God on our own, but it takes God to see God! Just as John 6:44 states that no one can come to me (Jesus) unless the Father draws him; no one can see the glory of heaven or enter that place without invitation. Heaven is an “invitation only” destination. Rev. 4:2 sees John immediately in the Spirit. This is critical. John 3:6 states that, that which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of Spirit is Spirit. It is impossible to “see” the things of God without the Spirit of God which enables us to see.

When John is given the sight through this door, he sees things almost indescribable. The first sight he sees in heaven is a throne and someone sitting on it. Not streets of gold, not cherubs reclining on clouds, but a throne and a king on it! This is the focus of heaven, JESUS ON THE THRONE! Unlike the description of Jesus in the midst of the seven candlesticks, we see him on the throne, indescribable. Rev. 4:3 states that His appearance was like that of jasper and ruby (precious stones). In addition to the rich, beauty of the One on the throne, a rainbow that radiated like an emerald encircled the throne. No king of the earth could ever match the splendor of this King of Kings!



As John's gaze moved from the throne, he turns to the others who are in the throne room. Rev. 4:4 let's us know that there were twenty four other thrones with the same number of elders sitting on them. There have been over thirteen different ideas of who these elders might be from various Biblical scholars. They could be a select number of the redeemed chosen to worship and serve before the throne of God. Are they Old or New Testament saints (or both)? Are they actual or representative of a larger group. Well, we don't know. Never try to give answer to what God has not given Biblical answer to. Some things we will know when we see him and all things are revealed. We do know that they were dressed in white (this often symbolized the redeemed saints of God). And they had gold crowns (this represents those who have been given measure of authority by the King (Jesus)). Like someone seeing an overwhelming sight, John re-focuses his attention on the throne. Where he now hears thunder and sees lightning flashing from the throne (Rev. 4:5) He then sees seven blazing lamps in front of the throne and these represents the seven-fold Spirit of God. (The various operations of God) John then sees a sea which looks like glass (clear as crystal). Just when we thought these sights and sounds were breathtaking, we notice yet another peculiar sight. Rev. 4:6 tells us that there are four living creatures covered with eyes in the front and the back. Turn to Ezekiel 1 and ten then to Isaiah 6.

- Isaiah 6:1 (Heavenly Throne)
- Ezekiel 1:28 (Rainbow)
- Ezekiel 1:13-14 (Thunder and Lightning)
- Ezekiel 1:22 (Crystal Sea)
- Ezekiel 1:8 and 10:12 (full of eyes)
- Ezekiel 10:14-15 (Lion Calf, man and eagle)
- Isaiah 6:3 (Holy, Holy Holy is the Lord)

These four beings are reminiscent of the seraphim in Isaiah 6:2 and the cherubim in Ezekiel 10:15. These were guardians and protectors of the throne. This is not to keep God safe, but maybe to ensure that the glory of God does not consume other creatures. Rev. 4:8 tells us what they are doing non-stop (day and night). These four beasts are crying "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is and is to come." What an awesome proclamation to make! Whenever they would cry Holy, the twenty four elders would all down and worship. (vs. 10). They would then lay their crowns before the throne and say, "you are worthy, our Lord and God to receive glory and honor and power (why?) for you have created all things and by your will they were created and have their being". (vs. 11). These elders, although people in authority, realized that their authority paled in comparison to the One who sat on the throne. Notice their posture, they fell prostrate before Him. When do we bow or lay before the Lord's presence? They cast their crowns, they submitted their power and will to His will. When they realized Jesus' worthiness they gave him glory and honor. The reason for this is that Jesus created ALL things and by His will they have their being.