

THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN REVELATION 4:1-8

In Revelation 4 we move into the part of Revelation that deals with future events. This is the third and major section of the book (1:19). We currently live in the period of history described in Revelation 2 and 3. As we enter the portion of Scripture that deals with the future we are confronted with the throne of God. The word “throne” appears sixty times in the New Testament. Forty-five of those appearances are found in Revelation with the word being used thirteen times in Revelation 4. Revelation teaches us that our God reigns!!!! One day the church will join him in the throne room from which he reigns!!!

I. THE EXPERIENCE OF JOHN. 4:1-:4:2a.

A. The Event in John’s Life. Cp. 2 Cor. 12.

1. The door opened in heaven.
2. The voice as a trumpet.
3. The entrance into the throne room of heaven.

B. The Event that is Foreshadowed.

1. This takes place at the end of the church age.
 - a. After the things of Revelation 2 and 3.
 - b. The word “church” does not appear after 3:22 until 22:16.
 - c. Revelation 4:1 and 19:11 mark two pivotal points in Revelation.
 - a. In 4:1 a door is opened in heaven and the church enters heaven.
 - b. In Revelation 19:11 heaven is open and the church returns with Christ.
2. The church will one day be summoned to heaven. 1 Thess. 4:16.
3. This will also be a sudden event. 1 Cor. 15:51,52.
4. What John experienced in the spirit the church will experience literally.

II. THE THRONE IN HEAVEN. 4:2b-3, 5-6.

A. The Description of the Throne.

1. The rainbow around the throne. 2:3.
* The rainbow is a symbol of God’s covenant and mercy. Gen. 9:11-17. *
2. The sea of glass. 2:6.
 - a. In the tabernacle and temple there was a laver for the cleansing of the priests. Ex. 30:18-21; 1 Kings 7:23-27.
 - b. In heaven there is no need of cleansing, therefore, the sea before the throne is clean, shining and peaceful.
3. The sounds from the throne. 4:5.
 - a. These sounds speak of judgment. Ex. 19:16; Rev. 8:5; 11:19.
 - b. God is preparing to pour out his wrath upon the earth.

B. The Occupant of the Throne. See Isaiah 6.

1. Some believe that John saw Jesus Christ.

* The sardine and jasper stones speak of his blood and purity as well as pointing to the stones on the breastplate of the high priest. *

2. Others believe that this person is God the Father.

* The sequence of events in Revelation 4 and 5 favors this view. See Rev. 3:21. *

III. THE CREATURES AROUND THE THRONE. 4:4,7-8.

A. The Living Creatures.

* These are most likely the cherubim of Ezekiel 1 and 10. Cp. Isaiah 6. *

B. The Twenty-four Elders. (The church in heaven)

1. Their number represents the priesthood of God. 1 Chron. 24 and 1 Peter 2:9.

2. They are enthroned with Christ. Rev. 3:21.

3. They are clothed in white raiment. Cp. Rev. 3:5.

4. They are crowned. 2 Tim. 4:7,8.

5. They are a redeemed people. Rev. 5:9,10.

Revelation 4 presents the future of the Church of Jesus Christ. We will be enthroned with him in heaven. That future is certain and we should never lose sight of it.