

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER 4, VERSES 2-4 AND 10-11

**PASTOR JOHN KILPATRICK
CHURCH OF HIS PRESENCE**

Welcome back to our study of the Book of Revelation. This week, we will discuss the Bema Seat. We recommend reading Chapter 4, Verses 2-4 and 10-11. (*Note: All Scriptures are KJV unless otherwise noted.*)

A DOOR STANDING OPEN

Revelation 4:1 begins,

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.'"

A Door Opening and a Voice Like a Trumpet Talking

A door opening and a voice like a trumpet talking are themes that parallel other places in Scripture, which fortify the doctrine of the Rapture. John represents the Church being caught up in Heaven through an open door. The Revelation 4:1 open door is the way through which the Church goes up into Heaven. This door opens again in Revelation 19:11 when the saints return with Christ after the Tribulation.

11 "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

14 "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

Revelation 19:11, 14

*14 "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, **15** To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.'"*

Jude 14-15

The Greek word for "church," *ecclesia*, is mentioned 19 times in the Book of Revelation. It appears 18 times in Chapters 1-3, and the word does not appear again until Revelation 22:16, after the Tribulation.

The voice like a trumpet talking corresponds to **I Corinthians 15:51-52**:

*51 "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, **52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."*

I Thessalonians 4:16-17 also addresses this:

16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

In the Book of Revelation, there is another time when "come up hither" is mentioned. It is when the two witnesses are killed, resurrected, and raptured into Heaven.

11 "And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. 12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, 'Come up hither.' And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

Revelation 11:11-12

JOHN SEES HEAVEN

When John receives the Revelation of Jesus Christ, he is an older man in his 90's. When the Lord takes him into Heaven, we are given a first-hand account as he begins to write what he sees.

In Revelation Chapter 6, John begins reporting what is happening on the earth, but for now, in Chapters 4-5, we have a comprehensive first-time look inside Heaven itself as John reveals the sights, sounds, and events.

The Throne

Revelation 4:2 states,

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

The Throne is going to be front and center. John will mention this Throne no less than 17 times in just two chapters, Revelation 4 and 5. You and I can see what the Throne of God looks like through John the Revelator. John will use certain prepositions when describing it:

- On the Throne
- Around the Throne
- Out of the Throne
- Before the Throne

We get a grand vision of this magnificent Throne!

The One Who Sits on the Throne

Who is the one seated on the Throne? The Lord God Almighty, El Shaddai!

Revelation 4:2-3 says,

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.”

God’s presence on His Throne was like a jasper and a sardius stone. We don’t see the Throne in these colors, but the One who sits on the Throne.

John mentions these two colors of stones as he describes *The One* seated on the Throne. These are precious stones to behold! To understand this, we can go back to the Old Testament.

The Breastplate of the High Priest

God gave Moses the pattern for Tabernacle worship and the order of worship for the Temple in the Wilderness. The High Priest was to wear a breastplate with 12 stones in it:

15 “And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. 16 Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. 17 And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row. 18 And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. 19 And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. 20 And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. 21 And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.”

Exodus 28:15-21

These stones represented the 12 tribes of the children of Israel: Reuben’s, the oldest son, was sardius, which was red. Benjamin’s, the youngest son, was jasper.

The breastplate was to be connected to the ephod of the High Priest.

Let’s look at something very touching in **Exodus 28:29**:

29 “And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.”

Here is the picture: The High Priest in the Old Testament carried the breastplate of judgment over his heart. It contained twelve stones arranged in 4 rows. The first stone was sardius, which was blood red and had Rueben’s name on it. The last stone was jasper and had Benjamin’s name on it. All the other tribes’ names were engraved on the other stones—not one was missing.

Everywhere the High Priest went in the Holy Place, he carried all of Israel on his heart as he interceded for them and averted judgment. This is a beautiful picture of safety, protection, and security. Aaron, as High Priest, was a type and shadow of Jesus, our High Priest, after He ascended into Heaven.

14 *“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. **15** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. **16** Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*

Hebrews 4:14-16

Jesus has not changed. He that keeps Israel never sleeps. Jesus is at the right hand of God, making intercession.

Rainbow

John saw a rainbow round about 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.”*

Revelation 4:3

Let’s look deeper at this rainbow.

The Law of First Mention is that when something appears for the first time in Scripture, it gives us the key to its meaning. We see a rainbow first mentioned in Genesis. In Noah’s day, God sent a great flood. Every human was destroyed except for eight. After the judgment had passed, Noah and his family emerged from the ark. He built an altar and slew sacrifices, presenting the animals’ blood.

20 *“And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.”*

Genesis 8:20

When God saw the sacrifice, a type of Calvary, He made a promise.

21 *“And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. **22** While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”*

Genesis 8:21-22

God’s promise was on the basis of a sacrifice of blood. Let’s look at the promise God made.

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. **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.”

Genesis 9:12-16

This was the first rainbow. It was a covenant sign.

A rainbow is formed by the sun after a storm has passed. It is a sign the storm is over.

That is why John sees a rainbow above the Throne: The Church’s storms are over. A new day is dawning.

Look at this. Jesus is speaking:

27 “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Matthew 24:27

Lightning is an atmospheric sign of an approaching storm. In our part of the world in the United States, a storm does not come out of the East. When you see lightning in the East, the storm has already passed.

Have you ever gone outside and looked after a storm passed? You might see lightning playing amongst the clouds after the storm has spent, and its energy was released. Then appears a brilliant rainbow. It comes after the storm.

The rainbow appeared after the Flood. When we get to Heaven, we will see a visual, a rainbow, that our storms and trials have passed. It will be a new day that has arrived for the Church.

24 Elders

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.”

Revelation 4:4

Now John sees 24 seats. On these seats are 24 elders sitting in white raiment.

Who are the Elders?

They represent the 12 Tribes of Israel (the Patriarchs) and the 12 Apostles. These elders represent the saints of God from both Old and New Testaments.

Let's also look at the New Jerusalem in **Revelation 21:12, 14**:

12 "And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

Golden Crowns

Revelation also refers to the golden crowns:

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."

Revelation 4:4

On the elders' heads were golden crowns. These are lesser crowns than Jesus' crown. His crown is a diadem and is superior to all crowns.

Revelation 19:12 references Jesus' crowns:

12 "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself."

The 24 Elders Have Their Crowns

This represents that the saints have received their crowns at the Bema Seat of Christ.

The Elders Cast Their Crowns

*10 "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying.
11 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'"*

Revelation 4:10-11

The elders cast their crowns because there is only One worthy, Jesus our King.

People will not be walking around Heaven comparing each other's crowns. There will be no jealousy, no comparison, and no covetousness.

THE BEMA SEAT OF CHRIST

The Great White Throne Judgment in Revelation Chapter 20 is for ungodly sinners, those who rejected Christ. They will be recompensed a terrible reward for their life of evil: bitter rewards for what they have done, seeds they have sown with Christless lives and godless influences.

The Bema Seat of Christ is for the Christians. It is where rewards are given. These rewards were earned on earth. There are rewards to rule over cities and for placements in honorable positions, as described in **Luke 19:15-19**:

15 “And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 Then came the first, saying, ‘Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.’ 17 And he said unto him, ‘Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.’ 18 And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.’ 19 And he said likewise to him, ‘Be thou also over five cities.’”

Seven Areas to Be Examined at the Bema Seat of Christ

Here are seven different areas that will be examined when we appear before the Bema Seat of Christ, where Jesus rewards us.

1. How We Treated Other Believers

41 “He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. 42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”

Matthew 10:41-42

Jesus makes earning a reward easy. He desires for you to be rewarded. It’s as simple as just giving a cup of cold water! Rewards are not just for the elite, the greatest, and the mightiest of the faith. The common person will be rewarded.

2. How We Used Our Money

1 “Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, ‘They have their reward.’ 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.”

Matthew 6:1-4

3. How We Endured Personal Injustice, Mistreatments, Sufferings, and Trials

11 “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”

Matthew 5:11-12

27 "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,
28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."

35 "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest:"

Luke 6:27-28, 35

10 "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Revelation 2:10

4. How Much the Rapture Meant to Us and Shaped Our Lives

8 "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

II Timothy 4:8

5. How We Ran the Race God Ordained for Us

4 "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain."

I Corinthians 9:24

13 "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:13-14

6. How We Treated Strangers

35 "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: **36** Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Matthew 25:35-36

12 "Then said he also to him that bade him, 'When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. **13** But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: **14** And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'"

Luke 14:12-14

7. How We Used Our Tongues

36 *“But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”*

Matthew 12:36