

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER 4, VERSES 4-11

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CHURCH OF HIS PRESENCE**

Before moving on to Chapter 5, we will finish our study of Chapter 4 with a brief review and introduction to the seven Spirits of God and the four beasts. We recommend that you begin by re-reading Revelation Chapter 4:1-11. (*Note: All Scriptures are KJV unless otherwise noted.*)

REVELATION 4:4-11

In Revelation Chapter 4, John gives us a view into Heaven. God permits us to have a sanctioned view of the sights and sounds.

John beholds the following:

- I. **God on His Throne.** He is so in awe of the Throne that he mentions it no less than 17 times in just two chapters, Revelation 4-5.
- II. **24 Elders with Gold Crowns**
- III. **The Seven Spirits of God**
- IV. **Four Beasts**

24 ELDERS

I want to identify the elders again as we continue our study in Chapter 4 of the Book of Revelation.

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

John sees 24 seats; on these seats are 24 elders sitting in white raiment with golden crowns.

Who Are the Elders?

The elders include the 12 Tribes of Israel (the Patriarchs) and the 12 Apostles, the saints of God from both the Old and New Testaments.

Let's look at the New Jerusalem and what is represented in **Revelation 21:12 and 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

The 24 Elders Have Crowns of Gold.

These elders are not angels because angels do not earn crowns. The elders with their crowns indicate the saints of God (Old and New Testaments) have received their reward at the Bema Seat of Christ. On their heads were golden crowns. These are lesser crowns than Jesus' crown, which 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 Elders Cast Their Crowns Before the Throne.

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.

THE BEMA SEAT OF CHRIST

It Is Not the Great White Throne Judgment.

Last week, we looked at the Bema Seat of Christ. To continue our study, it is important to note that the Bema Seat of Christ is not the Great White Throne Judgment toward the end of the Book of Revelation. The Great White Throne Judgment in Revelation Chapter 20 is for ungodly sinners, those who rejected Christ. The Bema Seat of Christ is for the Christians.

It Is Not a Judgment of Salvation.

The Bema Seat of Christ is not a judgment of whether we are saved. That judgment took place for us at Calvary. For born-again believers, God's wrath for our sin was upon Jesus.

It Is a Judgment to Determine Rewards.

We are judged at the Bema Seat of Christ to be rewarded. We will receive rewards for our righteous decisions, our labors for Christ, and our work for God.

I Corinthians 3:10-15 NKJV relates,

10 "According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

It Comes After the Rapture.

The judgment for our reward comes after the Resurrection (after the Rapture).

12 "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Revelation 22:12

We Cannot Be Rewarded When We Die.

Our reward cannot be given to us when we die but only after Jesus comes at the Rapture. The bodies of Christians must be united with their souls and spirits before they can be rewarded for the works that were done while in their bodies.

After the Resurrection (after the Rapture), we shall all appear before Christ to be judged for what we did while in our bodies. **II Corinthians 5:10 NKJV** states,

10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

No man can be rewarded for the things done in his body immediately after his death. WHY? When we die, the influence of our lives goes on until Jesus comes. Only Christ, with the Holy Spirit, can unravel the influence of a Christian's life. Only they can determine the reward we deserve.

Think of the Apostle Paul. Also, think of the Apostle John, who wrote the Book of Revelation. Their lives and influences continue until the End of the Age, and they appear before the Bema Seat of Christ. The shadow of our lives extends far beyond the grave.

When we are resurrected or raptured, we shall appear before the Bema Seat of Christ to receive our rewards. Our rewards are not just crowns but assignments for our future reign with Christ. There are rewards to rule over cities and for placements in honorable positions.

Luke 19:15-24 shares,

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.”

THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD

Revelation 4:5 introduces the seven Spirits of God:

5 “And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

There are several other places in the Book of Revelation where the “seven Spirits” are mentioned.

“...from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;”

Revelation 1:4

“These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God...”

Revelation 3:1

“...having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.”

Revelation 5:6

What Are the Seven Spirits of God?

I want to make it clear that there is only one Holy Spirit. The expression “seven Spirits” does not mean there are seven different Holy Spirits. It also does not mean that the Holy Spirit is divided into seven different parts. There is only one Holy Spirit:

4 “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;”

Ephesians 4:4 NKJV

11 “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

I Corinthians 12:11 NKJV

Just as there are nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit, there are seven ways in which the Holy Spirit expresses Himself. We find this seven-fold description in **Isaiah 11:1-2**:

1 “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;”

The same Holy Spirit is described with seven different expressions. It's not seven different Holy Spirits but seven different functions of the same Holy Spirit:

1. The Spirit of the Lord
2. The Spirit of Wisdom
3. The Spirit of Understanding
4. The Spirit of Counsel
5. The Spirit of Power
6. The Spirit of Knowledge
7. The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord

Seven is the number of completion and perfection.

The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, is perfect and complete; therefore, the Seven Spirits of God is a picture of the perfect and complete Person of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit in perfection in His ministry.

THE FOUR BEASTS

6 “And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. 8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.’ 9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 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 4:6-11

The word “beast” in the Greek, is *thérion* and is used to describe a wild animal. It is also used to describe the Antichrist and False Prophet, the beast out of the earth and the beast out of the sea.

In Revelation 4, however, the Greek word for “beast” is *zoon*. It means a living being, a living creature, something alive. The word “*zoo*” has its roots in the Greek word, *zoon*.

Revelation 4:6 could say, "...and round about the Throne, were four living ones full of eyes before and behind."

The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like a calf (ox), the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. Each creature had six wings, was full of eyes, did not rest day or night, and said, "Holy, holy, holy."

Whenever these zóon give glory, honor, and thanks to Him who sits on the Throne, the 24 elders fall down, worship, and cast their crowns. Notice what the 24 elders say when the beasts give glory, honor, and thanks:

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 4:11

This is an indicator that these four beasts represent God's creation in the animal world.

The Number Four in the Bible

The number four in the Bible represents God's creation. There are four elements: (earth, wind, fire, and water), four seasons (winter, spring, summer, and fall), and four winds. There are also four main directions (north, south, east, and west), and, in the Parable of the Sower, four kinds of seeds and four kinds of soil. Jewish texts, such as the Talmud, discuss forms of life that God made, as outlined below:

Types Of Beasts (Living Creatures)

1. Man - first among all God's creation
2. Ox - head of all domestic life
3. Lion - head of wild animal life
4. Eagle - the birds and fowls of the air

These are the four descriptions of the zóon in Revelation Chapter 4.

Camps of the Tribes of Israel

In the book of Numbers, Chapter 2, the 12 Tribes of Israel camped on all four sides of the Tabernacle:

1. Three tribes to the east under the standard of Judah - a lion
2. Three tribes to the south under the standard of Reuben - a man
3. Three tribes to the west under the standard of Ephraim - an ox
4. Three tribes to the north under the standard of Dan - an eagle

When all Tribes moved and gathered in the wilderness, they camped under four primary standards, a picture of the four zóon.

Why Did These Four Living Creatures Join the 24 Elders in the Ultimate Praise Song of Chapter 4?

Let's look at **Romans 8:19-23 NKJV**:

19 "For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."

Why Do Our Bodies Need to Be Redeemed?

When mankind sinned in Eden, they were driven out of the Garden, and the Tree of Life was guarded.

24 "So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life."

Genesis 3:24 NKJV

Cherubim were placed at the gate on the east side to guard and keep the Tree of Life away from man, lest man, in his sinful state and corruptible mortality, would have eaten of that tree and lived forever.

Guarding the Tree of Life was part of God's provision for our blessing.

If man had eaten of that tree after eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he would have been forever in his corrupted body of death.

We need a new body because flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

50 "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption."

I Corinthians 15:50 NKJV

To not be able to die and lay aside our corruptible bodies is the worst sentence anyone could place on us. If you became disabled, blinded, deaf, diseased, senile (had Alzheimer's or dementia), suffered from cancer, had a stroke, or developed psychotic disorders, you would be forced to live in that corruptible state forever in a house of clay. You would be sentenced to live a thousand deaths and still not be able to die.

6 "In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them."

Revelation 9:6 NKJV

The Lord sent Cherubim to guard the Tree of Life and protect it so Satan would not maneuver Adam and Eve to that tree to eat of it and live forever in a fallen and corruptible condition. God placed those Cherubim there for man's sake. It was the goodness and mercy of God.

God allowed our bodies to be planted in the earth and buried so that they could be resurrected and experience eternal life with a glorified body. In our mortal bodies, we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our glorious new bodies. God has fashioned them for us, and we will receive them at the Resurrection, in the Rapture. Look what appears again in Revelation 22 after we get our resurrected bodies!

1 "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

Revelation 22:1-2

Creation Awaits

Creation has been waiting for deliverance since the fall of man, languishing under great bondage. The zóon in Revelation Chapter 4 position themselves for that redemption that will reach God's creation. We will later see, in Chapter 5, Jesus taking the sealed scroll to begin the process of redeeming creation. It is God's wrath on Satan's hold on the earth. Jesus sets out to redeem ALL that has been in bondage since the fall of man.

The Result of Creation's Redemption

What will be the result of the redemption of creation? **Isaiah 11:2-10 NKJV** gives us some details:

2 "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. 3 His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; 4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist. 6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. 10 And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious."

The Function of the Four Living Creatures

Now, let's examine the function of the four living creatures. It is through decrees and judgments that the Lord will redeem the lost and fallen creation. Those that oppose God will be destroyed.

The four living creatures, zóon, are there to carry out and oversee the decrees and purposes of God in human history in His created universe. They are instruments of judgment to carry out the decrees.

1 "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. 3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, 'Come and see.'"

5 "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, 'Come and see.' And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand."

7 "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, 'Come and see.'"

Revelation 6:1-3, 5, 7

5 "And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: 6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. 7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. 8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

Revelation 15:5-8

A zóon loaded the angels' vials full of the wrath of God. It oversaw God's wrath. As the wrath of God is poured out, all creation will be redeemed.

The wrath is not because God hates man. It is an all-out war against the devil. It is to redeem creation. God deals with everything that messed up His original Eden up: sin, corruption, pollution, and toxins. Jesus will not begin his Millennial Reign until Earth has been made ready!