



The REVELATION of Jesus Christ

Chapter 4

“After These Things . . . Heaven!”

-Let us review Revelation 1:19 for this is the key verse to understand the order of *The Book of Revelation*: “Write the things which you have seen (pertains to Chapter 1, the revelation of Jesus), and the things which are (Chapters 2 – 3, this pertains to the church past, present, and future), and the things which will take place after this (pertaining to Chapters 4 – 22, chapters 4 and 5 the church is heaven after the rapture, then begins the seven-years tribulation chapters 6 – 19, chapter 20 is the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth, chapters 21 and 22 we move on to the New heavens, new earth, and the new Jerusalem, forever and ever).” The term “after this” in Greek is “*meta tauta*,” this same Greek phrase is also found twice in Revelation Chapter 4:1.

> Let us review the seven churches and their historical reference:

(2:1-7) *Ephesus* - The Apostolic Church (1st Century)

(2:8-11) *Smyrna* - The Martyr Church (A.D. 100 – A.D. 314)

(2:12-17) *Pergamum* - The Worldly Church (A.D. 314 – A.D. 590)

(2:18-29) *Thyatira* - Church of the Dark Ages, “Romanism” (A.D. 590 – A.D. 1000- continues today)

(3:1-6) *Sardis* - The Protestant Church, “Reformation” (A.D. 1517 – A.D. 1800)

(3:7-13) *Philadelphia*- The Revived or Faithful Church (A.D. 1800 to Rapture, then found in heaven in Revelation chapters 4 – 5.)

(3:14-22) *Laodicea* - The Apostate Church (This “Last Days Apostate Church”, is not going up in the rapture of the bride of Christ, but is left behind to go through the Great Tribulation (Rev. Ch. 6 – 19), this apostate church embraces the harlot religious system, also known as the one-world religious system, led by the *false prophet*, thus they will give allegiance, worship, and honor to the Antichrist.)

- FYI – Insight on the “FALSE PROPHET” – The “*False Prophet*” is the coming religious leader of the end times who, along with the

DRAGON (the devil) and the BEAST (the Antichrist), forms an unholy trinity in opposition to God (Rev 16:13; 20:10).

- The Book of Revelation speaks of two beasts:

(1) The Antichrist (Rev 13:1-10), a political ruler who sets up an evil empire in opposition to the kingdom of God; and

(2) the false prophet, a religious leader inspired by Satan who deceives the world into worshipping the Antichrist (Rev 13:12). But they will be overthrown by Christ and cast into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20).

> Let us begin REVELATION CHAPTER 4:

> (1a) After these things a door is opened in heaven!

- Let's talk about doors! This is one of four open doors in heaven in *The Book of Revelation*:

- Door #1 – Chapter 3:8 – Speaking to the church of Philadelphia, Jesus says “I have set before an open door” a door that is open to preach the gospel to the entire world in these last days!

- Door #2 – Chapter 3:20 – This is a door of invitation to the lukewarm / apostate church of the last days! To Laodicea, Jesus says, “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.” Jesus is saying come out of the last days apostate church before it is too late for your soul!

- Door #3 – Chapter 4:1 – This is an open door into heaven as the rapture has taken place! “After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

- Door #4 – Chapter 19:11-15 – This door is at the second coming of Christ to bring judgment upon an ungodly, unrighteous, and rebellious world! “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He

Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

- Let us always remember the beautiful promise of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when He said, John 10:9-10 - **I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**

> **(v1b) Come up here after these things take place!**

- **After these things** – Once again, the Greek is *Meta Tauta*, the same as Revelation 1:19 - **Write the things which you have seen (chapter 1), and the things which are (chapters 2 - 3, church history/church future), and the things which will take place after this (meta tauta).**

After these things and after this is the same Greek Meta Tauta, which speaks of the things of the church, the word church or churches is used some 20 times before chapter 4, but never again throughout The Book of Revelation until chapter 22:16 - "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." This verse speaks of the entire testimony of The Book of Revelation for the benefit of believers.

The **church, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ** has been taken to heaven in the rapture before the seven-years of TRIBULATION! **God will not pour out His wrath upon the body of Christ, the bride of Christ!** **Learn these passages of promise and comfort:**

- 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 - **For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.**

- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 - **But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the**

hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

- After the church has finished her testimony upon the earth, then the rapture will take place, we read in 1Thessalonians 4:13-18

- But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up (Latin “rapturo,” Greek “harpazo”) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

- What is the meaning of this terminology fallen asleep, or those who sleep? Interestingly, Paul could not say that these past believers who had physically died were dead, for they have everlasting life (John 5:24; 6:47).

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 - So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

In Philippians 1:23-24 - For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

In 2 Corinthians 12:1-5 - It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows — how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

We must understand that our past bodies on earth are going to be transformed into a glorious body for heaven and earth!

- Philippians 3:20-21 reads, *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*

We will need our glorified bodies for the 1000-year reign of Christ! This transformational event will happen for all believers, those who have died and gone to heaven, and those who are alive at the rapture of the church!

- Paul grants us more information in 1 Corinthians 15:50-53- *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment (Greek "atomo" an atom of time), in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

- Listen to this great promise from our Lord and Savior Jesus when he said in John 14:1-3- *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

~ How close are we to the "rapture" of the church?

- Israel will become a nation once again according to the "Parable of the fig tree" spoken by Jesus in Matthew 24:32-35 (Israel became a nation May 14, 1948.)

- Corruption, crime, violence, will fill the world like the days of Noah (Genesis Ch. 6:1-11) according to Jesus in Matthew 24:32-51;

- Immorality will be glorified and will rule the day like the days of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis Ch. 19) according to Jesus in Luke 17:28-30 - *Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.*

- The last days apostasy will take place according to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 -

*Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ (this term speaks of the rapture) had come. Let no one deceive (Greek *exapatao* – to seduce wholly) you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away (Greek *apostasia* – a defecting from the truth) comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

- It will be a time of separation, the make-believers will be left behind and true believers will be taken up in the rapture, Jesus explains this in “*The Parable of the Ten Virgins*” in Matthew Ch. 25:1-13.

> (v2-11) What will Heaven be like when we arrive in the rapture?

(v2-3) What will we see? The throne of God was like a *Jasper stone*, like the brilliance of a diamond, a clear crystal with a purple hue. Next it is like the *Sardius stone*, blood red in color, like a ruby.

(v4-5) The twenty-four elders could represent the Church - C.I. Scofield writes, “The very word “elder” has church significance (1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5). Crowns throughout the NT are exclusively presented as rewards for the faithful in the Church. These elders sit on thrones which are associated with the central judgment throne of God (vv. 2-4; cp. 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12). The appearance of these elders, already glorified, crowned, and enthroned before the opening of the sealed book of judgment (ch. 5:8-12) and before the end-time judgments are loosed upon the world (chs. 6—18), reaffirms that the Church is not to be subjected to the judicial wrath and judgments of that time (cp. Jn. 5:24; Rom. 5:9; 1 Th. 1:10; 5:1-11; Rev. 3:10).”

Another idea that has been bantered about is that it is the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. It is important to realize that God did not give us names of these elders, we can speculate, but we cannot say for sure, once again, only God knows and that’s the way He wants it.

(v5) What are the “seven Spirits of God”?

This is not speaking of seven distinct Spirits, but the one Holy Spirit in the seven- fold plenitude of His power as found in Isaiah 11:1-2 - There

shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

The (1) Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,

The (2) Spirit of wisdom and (3) understanding,

The (4) Spirit of counsel and (5) might,

The (6) Spirit of knowledge and (7) of the fear of the Lord.

(v7-9) *The four living creatures* - Some Bible scholars see these creatures as manifestations of Christ in the Gospels. In the first Gospel, Matthew presents Jesus as the lion of the tribe of Judah. Mark presents Him as a calf, a beast of burden representing a suffering servant. Luke presents Him as the Son of man. John presents Him as the Son of God, the eagle representing His Divinity.

It is believed that the creatures are angels of the class known as *Seraphim* (cp. Is. 6:2) or the *Cherubim* (Ez. 1:4-14; 10:20-22). These creatures declare who God is: He is HOLY; He is ALMIGHTY; He is ETERNAL! True worship of God is when we give Him “glory and honor & thanks.” The Book of Revelation is filled with hymns of praise (Rev 4:8,11; 5:9-13; 7:12-17; 11:15-18; 12:10-12; 15:3-4; 16:5-7; 18:2-8; 19:2-6).

- Verse 8 – These incredible creatures continuously declare who God is by saying, “*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and is, and is to come!*” Like as In heaven we will hear a anthem announces the holiness of the trinity, “*holy, holy, holy;*” God is holy and righteous in all his ways and there is no evil to be found in Him; then we hear “*Lord God Almighty*” proclaiming of the majestic omnipotence of God the Almighty, truly nothing is impossible with God; then the declarative that God is eternal “*Who was, and is, and is to come!*” God who will love all believers forever and ever, and ever! And all God’s people said, “Amen!”

- We see similarities in another heavenly scene from Isaiah 6:1-3 - *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said:*

*"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!"*

(v10-11) Then immediately the worship of the twenty-four elders explodes on the scene casting their crowns before the One who gave them these crowns, they worship God, saying,

*"You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created."*

- Warren Wiersbe gives us the wonder of worship in heaven as he writes, "The theme of this hymn in Revelation 4:11 is God the Creator, while in Revelation 5:9 the elders praise God the Redeemer. The praise in Revelation Ch. 4 is given to the Father on the throne, while in Revelation Ch. 5 it is directed to the Son (the Lamb) before the throne. The closing hymn (Rev 5:13) is expressed to both, another proof of the deity of Jesus Christ."

- Paul encourages believers with words of promise, truth, and hope in Romans 8:18-25 - *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.*

Thus we sing with great joy and exuberance -

How Great Thou Art

Oh Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout the universe displayed

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And see the brook and feel the gentle breeze

Oh, and when I think that God, his Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in

**That on that cross my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin**

**When Christ shall come with shout of Acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart?
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim my God how great Thou art?**

**Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art?
Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art?
How great Thou art, how great Thou art?
How great Thou art, how great Thou art?**