

“Upward Focus”  
Revelation 4:2-11

~ READ TEXT ~

AS YOU SETTLE IN...

- Turn to the book of (Rev. 4:2-11)

~ LET'S PRAY ~

NOTE TAKERS...

- I've titled today's message: **“Upward Focus”**

*“If you read history you'll find that the Christian's who did the most in the present world, were those that thought most of the next. Since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world, they have become ineffective in this one.”*

*~ C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity ~*

~ INTRO ~

IN (Revelation 4)...

- We see the church in heaven.

AS WE RECALL... CHAPTERS 1-3...

- The church was mentioned (19x) different times.
  - But then it **suddenly vanished** off the scene.

AS I MENTIONED LAST WEEK...

- This is NOT an **explicit reference** to the rapture...
  - But this is the place where the rapture occurs!
    - (1 Cor. 15:52) NLT “... *In the blink of an eye...*”

SO... (v.1) STARTS OFF WITH...

- The Greek words Meta Tauta = “*after these things*”

WHICH POINTS BACK TO (Rev. 1:19)...

- And gives us the **outline** of the book!

~ STUDY ~

NOW... AFTER THE CHURCH IS REMOVED FROM THE WORLD...

“Upward Focus”  
Revelation 4:2-11

- We get a glimpse of what’s happening in heaven.

**POINT #1 – THRONE ROOM PERSPECTIVE:**

(vv.2-3)

THE SCENE IN HEAVEN...

- “*He who sat there was like Jasper...*”
  - (Grk.) *e-a-spes* = Gem (jasper / opal / carnelian / diamond)
    - If it’s a **diamond** = Purity.
  - “*And Sardius stone in appearance...*”
    - This would be like a **ruby** = Redemption.

IN THE O.T.THESE STONES...

- Had a relation to the tribes of Israel...
  - The high priest would wear a breastplate with 12-stones...
    - Representing all 12-tribes before God!

IN (Ex. 28:17-20)

- The *sardius* stone was first on the breastplate...
  - And *jasper* the last one!

**POINT BEING...**

THE PURITY OF GOD & THE REDEMPTION OF GOD...

- Has been **accomplished** & the church is in heaven with Him!

NOW... SOMETHING LIKE A RAINBOW...

- Was around the throne (v.3) NKJV

- 1) In (Gen. 9:13-16) Noah saw a rainbow **after** the storm.
- 2) In (Ezk. 1:26-28) Ezekiel saw a rainbow **over** the storm.
- 3) Here (Rev.4:3) John sees the rainbow **before** the storm...  
(Before the tribulation and judgment that is coming)

**POINT #2 – CHURCH BEFORE GOD:**

(v.4)

NOW THERE ARE **A FEW** DIFFERENT VIEWS...

- On who the *24-Elders* are.

“Upward Focus”  
Revelation 4:2-11

➤ Scholars give three options:

- 1) Angels
- 2) Israel & church
- 3) Church

**FIRST – LET’S BE FAIR...**

- **We do see angels** show up in white robes.
  - (John 20:12) NLT

**BUT...**

- We never see angels wearing crowns **AND that’s key here!**
  - Only believers get crowns
    - (1 Cor. 9:25) NKJV
    - (2 Tim. 4:8) NLT
    - (1 Peter 5:4) NLT
- Secondly, angels are distinguished from the 24-elders as seen in...
  - (Rev. 7:11) NKJV.

**SO... WE CAN...**

- Rule out Angles being the 24-elders.

**THE NEXT ONE IS...**

- Israel & the church (12-tribes + 12-apostles) = 24-elders.
  - The **biggest problem** with this view is that God is still...
    - Dealing with Israel in the tribulation period.

**POINT BEING...**

- Israel is not a completed group yet!

**THIS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE...**

- Of why **context** is so important **when interpreting a verse.**

**WHAT’S BEEN THE TOPIC...**

- Of discussion over the **last two chapters?**
  - The church!

**(v.4) AGAIN...**

- The very word “*elder*” has church significance!

“Upward Focus”  
Revelation 4:2-11

BACK IN...

- (Rev. 2:10) we see crowns – Church of Smyrna.

The crowns = (Grk) *stephanos*

- Indicates crowns of victory not royalty!

- (Rev. 3:5) we see white robes – Church of Sardis.
  - (Rev. 3:21) His throne – Church of Laodicea.

THE BIBLE SAYS...

- We're "...joint heirs with Christ..." (Rom 8:17) NLT

SO **THESE 24-ELDERS ARE THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN!**

- And they're mentioned in Revelation...
  - As the **24-elders** or just **elders**.
    - Which represents the **complete body of Christ!**

(v.5)

- (Ex. 19:16) When Moses went up on Mt. Sinai...
  - There was lightening, thunder, trumpets.
    - (Rev 4:1) John says it was a *voice* speaking to him.

THE IDEA IS...

- When man is aware of God's holiness it's AWESOME!

HERE "*seven lamps of fire*" REPRESENT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- It's a **rare physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit.**
  - Other Examples:
    - At the baptism of Christ = Dove
    - At the birth of the church = Tongues of fire

\*Rare physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit!

**POINT #3 – AROUND GOD'S THRONE:**

(v.6(a) "*sea of glass*")

- Scholars are not certain what this means.
  - But here's what we can SEE around God's throne:

“Upward Focus”  
Revelation 4:2-11

- #1) (v.5(a) NLT – “*From the throne...*”  
➤ (Power of God’s voice)
- #2) (v.5(b) NLT – “*In front of the throne...*”  
➤ (Purity of God)
- #3) (v.6(a) NLT – “*In front of the throne...*”  
➤ (Calmness in God’s presence)
- #4) (v.6(b) NLT – “*In the center & around the throne...*”  
➤ (Safety in God’s presence)

(v.7)

“*four living creatures*”

- These are cherubim as seen in Ezekiel’s vision...  
➤ (Ezk. 1:5-22) & (Ezk. 10:20)

SCHOLARS SAY THE DESCRIPTION POINTS...

- To four aspects of how God would reveal Himself...  
➤ To humanity thru Christ:

- 1) Lion = Kingship (Matthew)
- 2) Ox = Servant (Mark)
- 3) Man = Humanity (Luke)
- 4) Eagle = His Deity (John)

(vv.9-11)

**APPLICATION:**

So what’s the take away from all this?

- 1) God is worthy to be worshipped.  
➤ SO (Rom. 12:1) “*...present our bodies as living sacrifices...*”
- 2) God created every person with a purpose...  
➤ We only have one life to live & a certain amount of time.
- 3) Heaven is the **realization of rewards** for Christian.  
➤ Get saved (2 Cor. 6:2) “*now is the day of salvation*”

“Upward Focus”  
Revelation 4:2-11

- And get busy! (Col 3:23-24)

GANG...

- God's not looking for *informed people...*
  - He's looking for *engaged people!*

TAKE THESE TRUTHS...

- And go into the world to spread the message of Jesus!

~ LET'S PRAY ~