

Week 6 – Rev. 4-5

We have been looking at the Revelation of Jesus Christ. We've seen how John described Him in his vision on the isle of Patmos.

We've examined Jesus letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey).

Today we the ultimate access. The very center of the universe, the Throne Room of God.

We are going to encounter a lot of symbolic language and scenes John sees that are difficult to interpret. The human mind can only comprehend so much and it is further limited by human language. The apostle Paul describes having a vision of Heaven which he could not even describe.

I am always a little skeptical of people who say they have died and gone to Heaven. Their visit usually is led by "Tour Guide" Jesus, and they see mansions, and golden streets and people they've missed. This is nice but in every visitation to Heaven or by someone from Heaven in the Bible most people reacted like John here in our text.

We are going to focus on 3 images today in which these 2 chapters are centered around.

Rev. 4

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

This refers to the time after the persecution of the churches he just wrote to in Rev. 2-3.

²At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.

(throne mentioned 17x in Rev. 4-5)

Very little details given of God Himself. John cannot see the Father for the glory the radiates from Him or else he does not want to try and describe Him. Daniel actually gives us more detail.

"As I looked, "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. Dan. 7:9

Obvious John realizes this is God's throne and it represents all authority. Remember how we closed last week. Jesus invited the church people at Laodicea if they overcame they would be seated with Christ and rule. The challenge is to let Christ in us now so we can rule with Him for eternity.

This is the same throne to which we are invited...

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Heb. 4:16

⁴Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. ⁶Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

24 elders = 1). 24 OT rep. of 12 tribes & 12 NT apostles. 2). Angelic beings - Rev. 8:3 same duty OT

In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. ⁷The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

Ezekiel and Isaiah have similar visions. Ezk. 10:14; Isa. 6:1-3.

4 creatures 1). Jesus in the four gospels, or 2). angelic type beings.
Eyes & wings = omniscience and omnipresence.

⁹Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

The idea of wearing a crown is so that it is something we have to offer Christ. The NT speaks about the crown of righteousness, reward for acts of service.

God is acknowledged as the absolute source and the sustainer of everything.

Rev. 5

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.

In Roman empire it was common for a will to be witnessed by seven people and each would place their seal on it.

This scroll was the will of God or the testament of Christ which was now about to be opened to release God's plan for the end of human history and the beginning of eternity. Heb. 9:15ff

²And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look

inside. ⁵Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

Only one person anywhere was uniquely qualified to open the seals. It is His will. Of course it's unusual for someone to be there to open their own will but Jesus rose from the dead.

The Lion of Judah goes back to a prophecy in Gen. 49:9-10. Root of David is from Isa. 11.

Remember, Revelation is the culmination of the entire Bible. All of the bible prophecies in the OT.

⁶Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

John looks and expects to see a Lion and what he sees is a Lamb. Same situation for the Jewish people of Jesus day. They were looking for a political or military solution to their problems, they didn't expect a sacrificial lamb. But this is what they celebrated every year at the Passover. Because a lamb without blemish was sacrificed God intervened on their behalf and freed them from bondage.

He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. Isa. 53:7

The horns symbolize power and the eyes represent awareness of everything. Zech 4:10, ***"eyes roan throughout earth."***

⁷He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

⁸And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

May my prayer be set before you like incense; Psa. 141:2

Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. Rev. 8:3

The primary prayer that is filling those bowls, **"Thy Kingdom Come"**.

⁹And they sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

Why is Jesus the only one worthy to open the scroll? He purchased all of humanity by taking our sin, our penalty and brought into His family. We were purchased from sin or the kingdom of darkness.

People from every ethnicity (humanity). There is only one race (human race) with ethnicities.

¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Again, if we allow Christ to rule in us now, He invites us to rule with Him for eternity.

¹¹ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

¹² In a loud voice they sang:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

¹⁴ The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

We join together today with not only people around the world in worshipping God but we also join in the worship going on around the throne.

As we move into a time of worship, focus on Christ.

You can either join the worship team in singing, find a place for prayer, receive communion, or join with those in back who are available to pray for you.

Sometimes it is hard to pray or worship. We feel overwhelmed by some thing we are facing. This is why we are having people available to pray with you.