

Revelation Chapter Four

- After receiving the messages concerning the seven churches from the Lord Jesus Christ, John's vision shifts from "the things that are" to "what will take place after these things" [4:1 cp. 1:19].
 - Recognizing this shift is the key to understanding the change of focus from the Church to what comes after the Dispensation of the Church is complete.
 - The Church will come to a conclusion when Jesus Christ comes from heaven to gather His Bride at the Rapture [Phil 3:20; 1 Thess 1:10; 4:16-17].
- John is taken up in the spirit and carried to the throne-room of God [4:2-3].
 - The One seated on the throne is God the Father.
 - During the Church Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, but there is no right hand throne mentioned here because the Church is complete.
 - The Father's sole session on the throne matches what we learned about in Dan 7:9-14 where the Ancient of Days takes His seat and gives dominion, glory and a kingdom to the Son of Man.
- Twenty-four elders are seated on twenty-four thrones surrounding the throne of God [4:4].
 - These elders are clothed in white/crowned and are the 24 highest rewarded members of the Church.
 - The Levitical priests were divided into 24 groups by lot [1 Chr 24-25] and this number of elders and thrones signifies the role of the Church as a heavenly priesthood [1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6].
 - In Daniel the occupants of these thrones are not mentioned – the Church was a mystery [Dan 7:9].
- Seven lamps of fire (God the Holy Spirit) stand before the throne of God [4:5].
 - The "seven spirits before His throne" are mentioned four times in Revelation [1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6] but nowhere else in Scripture.
 - The first use is in a Trinitarian passage indicating that this is God the Holy Spirit [1:4].
 - The "seven" is likely a reference to the ministries of God the Holy Spirit to mankind [Isa 11:2].

- Around the throne was a crystal sea [4:6 cp. Ezek 1:22], a location for those who overcome in the tribulation to sing praises to God [15:2-4].
- In front and behind the throne are the four living creatures [4:6].
 - These are six-winged seraphim who proclaim God's holiness [4:8-9].
 - Their faces [4:7] resemble the four-winged cherubim in Ezekiel 1:10 and 10:14.
- While the four seraphim are praising God, the elders of the Church join these angels in worship [4:10-11].
 - They fall down before God the Father and cast their crowns before His throne [4:10].
 - They join in the singing and offer up a creation song proclaiming God's worthiness [4:11].
 - There will be a continuation of this singing in chapter 5 when this group sings a new song after the Lamb is introduced [5:9-14].