

Revelation Chapters 4-7

Wednesday, March 20th 2024

Greeting and Invocation

Read “Central Focus”

Hymn: “The Church’s one foundation”

Prayer

*** Complete last week’s session (see page 8 and Thyatira”...also on question from 1:15: “his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace” = Brighton, pg. 50 last paragraph (READ)

The Throne in Heaven

4 After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” ²At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. ³And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. ⁴Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. ⁵From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, ⁶and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: ⁷the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. ⁸And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!”

⁹And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

¹¹ “Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.”

*** Life Light Leaders Guide + my own notes

1. The vision begins. (VERSE 1)
2. Very few have had the privilege to look into heaven while still on earth. St. Paul appears to have done so as he talks about in 2nd Corinthians 12. The prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel all describe the majesty of heaven and describe its inhabitants (Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1, and Daniel 7).
3. Now John. He describes it as “in the Spirit,” VERSE 2 that is a state of spiritual ecstasy, but with full consciousness.
4. At the center is “one seated on the throne” (4:2). This is God the Father.
5. So, Scripture says that no one can see God and live (Exodus 33:20) and that He dwells in “unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see” (1 Timothy 6:16), this is therefore an apocalyptic vision that enables John to “see” God in this vision.
6. VERSE 3 The two stones mentioned are the first and last stones listed in the Old Testament to describe the 12 stones on the breastplate of the priests. Holiness.
7. VERSE 3 His throne is surrounded by a rainbow. Mentioned also in Ezekiel 1:26-28. This rainbow is like an emerald. The rainbow is a sign of

covenant. John sees God who makes covenants of grace with His people. To be on a “THRONE” means complete sovereignty.

8. VERSE 5: Seven torches ARE the seven spirits = The Holy Spirit.
9. VERSE 5: “flashes of lighting... rumblings...thunder” Signals of events taking place...and reminder of that the LORD is to be held in awe. Exodus 19:16 at Mount Sinai.
10. VERSE 4: 24 Elders signify the 12 patriarchs and 12 apostles, the leaders of God’s people in the Old and New Testaments. They represent the ENTIRE Church. They too are on thrones and wear crowns, so they live and reign with God. Dressed in white to symbolize the righteousness of Christ upon them. Note: Christ has not yet appeared in this scene.
11. VERSE 6: Sea of glass: God’s holiness and Lordship over all things. He rules His creation. The four living creatures who represent all creation. VERSE 7: Four = four corners of the world. They represent 1) The wild animals, 2) Domesticated animals, 3) Birds of the air; and 4) Humanity. VERSE 8: The six wings call to mind the seraphim, angelic beings. Isaiah saw a vision of God’s throne room in Isaiah 6:2...and the faces are those of “living creatures” of Ezekiel 1, who in Ezekiel 10 are called “cherubim.” They are covered with eyes indicating that they see everything, nothing escapes their attention.
12. VERSE 8-11: Their task is to serve God, first of all through their adoration and singing. They sing the song of the seraphim in Isaiah 6, which has become the song of the Church: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty” OT “the Lord of hosts” = “the Lord of armies” ...God is “I AM who I AM” (Exodus 3:14-15) and his rule is ETERNAL.
13. Holy Trinity and trisagion: “Holy, Holy, Holy” this fills our worship, and is in our Kyrie: “Lord...Christ...Lord”
14. Thus far, only the Father and the Holy Spirit has been presented.
15. Enter Christ in Chapter 5...

The Scroll and the Lamb

5 Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ²And I saw a mighty

angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?”³ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it,⁴ and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.⁵ And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

⁶And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.⁷ And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne.⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.⁹ And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll

and to open its seals,

for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God

from every tribe and language and people and nation,

¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

¹¹Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands,¹² saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,

to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might

and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb

be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

¹⁴And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

1. VERSE 1: From throne to scroll as focus.
2. The Father holds it.
3. The cross tells “what must soon take place” (1:1; 4:1)
4. It holds the future
5. “MUST” – talk about implications
6. VERSE 2: Who is worthy? No one, but ONE.
7. VERSE 3: Emphasizing Christ Alone
8. VERSE 4: Same emphasis and climatic build up: Christ Alone.
9. VERSE 5: Genesis 49:9-10: “the Lion of the tribe of Judah”; Isaiah 11:1: “the root of David”...He is worthy to open the seals because He triumphed over Satan and death. He will open the seals because the future will reveal the ramifications of His victory for eternity.
10. VERSE 6: Jesus is THE Lamb. Sacrificial, atonement comes from Him. Passover Lamb. Jesus is our Passover Lamb (see 1 Corinthians 5:7).
11. God controls History and permitted His Son to be put to death on the day of Passover.
12. He is now risen and victorious. He is at the CENTER of the throne.
13. 7’s = completeness
14. Horns = all powerful
15. Eyes = all seeing = the seven spirits = the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the son (John 16:7).
16. VERSE 7: He takes the scroll
17. VERSE 8: The honor and glory given to the Father and is now given to the Son.

18. VERSES 9-10: Four groups, four again the number of the world...and throughout the world has made “a kingdom and priests” (1 Peter 2:5, 9, echoing Exodus 19:6 and Zechariah 3).
19. VERSES 11-12: A New Song sung by the innumerable heavenly hosts...reaching the climax at 12: SEVEN ATTRIBUTES OF HONOR.
20. VERSES 13-14: Now the all the saints...they live and reign in majesty coequal. Our best response is to join in the words of the sacred liturgy, with “angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven.”

The Seven Seals

6 Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, “Come!” 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.

3 When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” 4 And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

5 When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!”

7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” 8 And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. 10 They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

11 Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. 14 The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

1. VERSE 1: Not a triumph, but a calamity.
2. VERSE 2: Begins the “four horsemen of the apocalypse,” Zechariah 1:8-17 and 6:1-8. They are powers of the earth whom God uses as His agents of judgment upon the earth. Each color signifies the character of the rider and the form of judgment that strikes the earth before the end of the world.
3. VERSE 2: The first horseman is a conqueror, riding a white horse, the symbol of purity and of victory. Similar to Christ in 19:15, he is but an imitation, allowed for a time to set himself up as the ruler of the world – hence, an antichrist, that most blatant symbol of human pride, who seeks to be honored as God. His weapon is the bow, the weapon of Gog, the enemy of the people of God mentioned in Ezekiel 38-39. That he comes into the world should be no surprise, since Christ Himself warned of the coming of false Christs (Matthew 24:4-5).