



when CHRIST
returns

— REVELATION 1-5 —

Review: The Revelation of Jesus describes Christ as He is now!

- not Christ emptied of His heavenly attributes and humbled in His humanity.
- Rather: Jesus fully clothed in His heavenly glory ... as He was, as He is, and as He will always be!

1. What is the Revelation? (chapter 1, verses 1-2)

- “*a revelation of Jesus Christ*”
 - *apocalypsis* (Gk) - unveiling, disclosure.
- the curtain has been pulled back, and we are looking into what is happening in the spiritual world ... what is really happening:
 - the King is on the move ... **so pay attention!**
 - the King holds the keys of death & Hades ... **so do not be afraid!**
 - Jesus is the King of Kings ... **so worship Him!**

The First Vision: (1:19 – 3:22) – Jesus, the Risen Lord, speaks to the 7 Churches of Asia.

“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.”

- **Ephesus:** the loveless congregation. - *“Remember your first love.”*
- **Smyrna:** the persecuted congregation. - *“Continue to stand firm. I am with you.”*
- **Pergamum:** the accommodating congregation. - *“You tolerate false teaching.”*
- **Thyatira:** the compromising congregation. - *“You permit false teaching.”*
- **Sardis:** the sleeping congregation. - *“Wake up!”*
- **Philadelphia:** the poor, faithful congregation. - *“Hold on – I am coming soon.”*
- **Laodicea:** the complacent congregation. - *“You say you need nothing, but you are badly deceived ... Let me in!”*

The Second Vision: (4:1 – 11:18) – Heaven’s Throne; Heaven’s Lamb; Heaven’s Scrolls.

The first vision reveals what heaven sees happening on earth.

- Jesus describes the spiritual condition of His churches in Asia.

The next vision invites earth to see what is happening in heaven.!

- John is commanded to look in on the throne room of God!

4 *Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.”* **2** *And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it.*

4 Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.”² And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it.

- ³ The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian.*
- And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow.*
- ⁴ Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads.*

- *⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder.*
- *And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit of God.*
- *⁶ In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal.*
- *In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. ⁷ The first of these living beings was like a lion; the second was like an ox; the third had a human face; and the fourth was like an eagle in flight. ⁸ Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying,
“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty— the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.”*

⁹ Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever), ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne and say,

¹¹ “You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.”

The Throne of Heaven: (4:1-11)

1. The Throne is the first thing that John sees ... and is the most dominant image in all of Revelation!
 - mentioned directly 47 times; indirectly 27 times.
 - this alone reveals something very important!

The Throne of Heaven: (4:1-11)

1. The Throne is the first thing that John sees ... and is the most dominant image in all of Revelation!
2. The Throne is occupied!

² *Instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it.* ³ **The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian.**

The One on the Throne:

- more brilliant than words can describe. (v. 3)
³ The One sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian.
- Heavenly Creatures call Him, “The Lord God Almighty”. (v. 8)
*Day after day and night after night they keep on saying,
“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty — the One
who always was, and who is, and who is still to come.”*
- 24 Elders worship Him, declaring Him worthy of praise. (v. 11)
*¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down and worship, laying their crowns before the throne saying,
¹¹ “You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power.
For You created all things, and they exist because You created what You pleased.”*

The Point: Whoever occupies the Throne holds absolute authority!

... and the throne is God's forever!

- So: are you paying attention?
are you not afraid?
are you joining in worship?

Names I once feared in my lifetime are no longer spoken Powerful leaders have risen and fallen. Ideologies have come and gone. Apartheid. Marxism. Nazism. The balance of power has shifted. The centre of economic power has moved. Issues that seemed like matters of life and death are no longer discussed, being replaced by others. Yet one thing has not changed ... *"Look! A throne with Someone sitting on it!"*

Johnson

The Throne of Heaven: (4:1-11)

1. The Throne is the most dominant image in all of Revelation!
2. The Throne is occupied!
3. The Throne is surrounded in supernatural brilliance & power. (v.v. 3-11)
 - the glow of an emerald circles the throne like a rainbow. (v.3)
 - from the throne come flashes of lightening and thunder. (v.5)
 - 7 torches – the Spirit of God – stand in front of the throne. (v.5)
 - also in front of the throne is a crystal sea, like glass. (v.6)
 - 4 living creatures – lion, ox, man, eagle – who are all seeing and have six wings, surround the throne. (v.v.6-7)
 - 24 elders, dressed in white and with crowns on their heads, encircle the throne. (v.4)

Some Thoughts:

1. Life is not a democracy ... we exist in a Kingdom.
 - the throne is not up for grabs ... it belongs to God.
 - the throne is not an office God holds for a while.
 - even what John sees – the throne room of heaven – exists because God wills it so.

2. All creation naturally gives glory & honour to God their Creator.
 - even the strange creatures we do not see with our human eyes.
 - Only we have a choice whether to worship Him or not ... AND IT IS HERE – on earth – that the struggle is waged.
 - both behind the veil, and in front of it.

Truth: Satan does not attack God's creation at any other level this side of the veil ... because he is powerless to do so.

Some Thoughts:

3. Chapter 4 provides only half the picture of God that we need.
 - here we see His majesty, authority and sovereignty.
 - BUT, we also need to see His grace, mercy & love.
 - without them, we will live in constant fear of Him, because we are not holy ... we are sinful.
 - We need Chapter 5 (next week)