**standing before god’s awesome throne**

(Revelation 4)

**Revelation 4:** God’s majestic throne (symbolizing God in His absolute authority over everything) is permeated by the worship of all that surrounds it because He is holy, eternal, and the Creator of all that has, does, or will exist.

**Revelation 4**-----1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. 3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. 4 Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 Before the throne *there* *was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”

Before he passed away at the age of 82, Samuel Bronfman, was the CEO of the Seagram Company. One busy day he entered a crowded conference room and, anxious to get on with the meeting, sat in the closest chair he could find. One of his young assistants immediately said, "No, Mr. Bronfman, you're supposed to sit at the head of the table." Bronfman replied: "Young man, wherever I sit ***is*** the head of the table."

In Revelation 4:1, the apostle John has just finished his letter to the seven pastors of the churches in Rev 2-3 and he sees a door in heaven standing open before him. Then he hears the voice of Christ calling him to enter that door so that Jesus can show him the future—the things that must take place after this.

The moment John enters that door, he sees the throne of God and the One who sits on it—God the Father. You see, regardless of what the world around us thinks, God is sitting at the head of the table. And before Jesus shows John how He will deal with a world that is rebelling against Him, He wants him to stand before God’s awesome throne. He wants John to understand that all that will happen on planet earth in the future comes forth from

—One who is sovereign…

—One who is has absolute authority over everything and everyone…

—the One who “sits at the head of the table.”

**Title:** Standing Before God’s Awesome Throne

(Prayer)

In his best-selling book *The Problem of Pain,* C. S. Lewis wrote about mankind’s propensity to make God into what *they* want Him to be:

We want, in fact, not so much a Father in heaven as a grandfather in heaven--  
a senile benevolence who, as they say, **"liked to see young people enjoying themselves"** and whose plan for the universe was simply that it might be truly said at the end of each day, **"a good time was had by all."**

That is so true. People want God to be like this, but He is not. Revelation 4 revolves around the word **“throne.”** It is used 14X in this chapter alone and 42X in the entire book of Revelation. The word throne implies sovereignty. To say that God is sovereign is to say that He is the supreme ruler — the supreme being in the universe. His sovereignty extends over all His creatures from the highest to the lowest.

**Psalm 103:19**------The Lord has established His throne in heaven,   
 and His kingdom rules over all.

As Jesus begins His mission of showing John all that the future holds for rebellious mankind **as well as** the people of God, there are three powerful lessons that He wants us to consider about the sovereignty of God:

**1. Our sovereign God is full of grace and truth**

God is not just a God of wrath and He is not just a God of mercy—He is both!

John is standing before God’s awesome throne, and verse 3 tells us that it was:

…like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

**Jasper**---in John’s day = a diamond (see 21:11—“clear as crystal”   
(= God’s purity)

**Sardius**---fiery red---Dan 7:9: “His throne was a fiery flame.”   
(= God’s wrath/judgment)

**Rainbow**---Genesis says that rainbows are to remind us that God will never destroy mankind with a flood like He did in the days of Noah—and God has kept that promise. He is faithful. He keeps His promises.

So His throne is jasper (God’s purity), sardius (God’s wrath) and encircled with a rainbow (God’s faithfulness). It is a throne of grace **and** a throne of wrath. Our sovereign God is full of both grace and truth!

Author Rebecca Pippert wrote: “Think how we feel when we see someone we love ravaged by unwise actions and relationships. Do we respond with benign tolerance as we might toward strangers? Far from it. Anger isn’t the opposite of love. Hate is, and the final form of hate is indifference … If I, a flawed, narcissistic, sinful woman, can feel this much pain and anger over someone’s condition, how much more a morally perfect God who made them? God’s wrath is not a cranky explosion, but his settled opposition to the cancer of sin which is eating out the insides of the human race he loves with his whole being.”

We see this contrast between wrath and mercy again in verses 5-6:

We see the “wrath” side of God in v. 5:

5 And from the throne proceeded **lightnings**, **thunderings**, and **voices**. Seven lamps of **fire** *were* **burning** before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

But we also see the “mercy” side of God in v. 6:

Before the throne *there* *was* **a sea of glass**, like **crystal**.

God’s throne in heaven sits on a platform that is crystal clear. It is a sea or ocean, not of raging waves, but an ocean of glass---pure, calm. He is not a madman losing His marbles as He deals with the rebellion of mankind.

**Psalm 89:14**-----Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face.

Our sovereign God—the God who is above all and rules over all—is not just a God of mercy, and He is not just a God of wrath. He is both.

That is our first lesson as we stand with John before God’s awesome throne. But there is a second. Look at verse 4:

4 Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

**2. Our sovereign God invites His people to rule with Him one day**

When a person becomes the president of the US, that person immediately begins to vet and then invite people to become part of his cabinet — people who will govern along with him.

Obviously, because He is Almighty, God doesn’t need any help governing in the millennium and then in eternity, but He has **chosen** to do this. This is His way of rewarding those who have stayed close to Him on earth — they will have the opportunity to stay close to Him in heaven.

You say, how do you know that these 24 elders represent believers who will rule with God one day? (Some commentators say that they are angels of some kind.) It is because verses 8-10 say this:

**Revelation 5:8-10** . . .**the twenty-four elders** fell down before the Lamb. . . 9 And they sang a new song, saying: “You. . . have **redeemed us** to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and **have made us kings** and priests to our God; and **we shall reign on the earth**.”

Our sovereign God—the God who made EVERYTHING—is telling us here, *“I’m offering you the chance to share My rule over the universe. This is the greatest reward in heaven. Don’t blow it! Stay close to Me and obey what I tell you! Then you will reign with Me forever!”*

**1. Our sovereign God is full of grace and truth**

**2. Our sovereign God invites His people to rule with Him one day**

Now lesson 3 … look at verse 6b:

…in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come.

Due to time, I can’t go into all the amazing details here. But what we have here are four angels called the Seraphim that reflect God’s **attributes**:

* like a lion—King of beasts (Christ is King)
* like an ox—a beast of burden (Christ is servant)
* like a man—Christ is a man
* like an eagle—Christ is God

These angels *reflect* God’s attributes, and they *proclaim* God’s **holiness**:

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty…”

They do this continually before God’s throne as the 24 elders proclaim God’s **worthiness** (v. 11):

You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”

**3. Our sovereign God desires and deserves our continual worship**

By continual, I don’t mean a non-stop conversation with God, or a continual prayer meeting with Him, but a life that is lived, day-by-day to His honor and glory! Worshiping God in spirit and truth.

Jesus said, the Father is seeking this kind of worship (see John 4:23).

**APPLICATION**

* **Our sovereign God is a God of grace** (but also wrath)
* **God invites us to reign** (but not all will)
* **God deserves true, continual worship** (not just Sundays, etc.)

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John and Kay Tallman served God as missionaries in the Philippines with Martin and Gracia Burnham. The Burnham’s were taken by rebel forces and felt that God would be taking them home soon. In their last prayer together as a couple, they prayed: **"God, thank you for the privilege of serving you. Please help us to serve you with gladness."**

Kay Tallman wrote the following in a newsletter to supporters:

[After they prayed, bullets began flying.] Gracia was hit first and rolled down a hill away from the fighting. Then Martin was hit and rolled down right beside her. By God's own hand he laid Martin down; right by his precious bride of 19 years. They were together until he drew his last breath. As I poured out my heart to the Father I said, "God, this isn't how I would have written the last chapter." And his very gentle reply was, "Kay, this isn't the last chapter."

As I shared this with an older friend from church, she added, "And it's not your book!"

(Closing comments)

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**Pain is God’s Megaphone**

Late night TV host Conan O'Brien, on his first night back on the air (9-18-01) after the destruction of the World Trade Center buildings, said:

I don't exactly know how we're going to do this [go on with the show]. But we're going to try to do it…. That's what a lot of people here feel is the right thing to do—is get back and to try our hardest to move forward and to make sense of our lives at a time when absolutely nothing makes sense.

I don't talk about these things on the air, but I was raised Catholic. And today I did what I haven't done since the first show when I went on the air, September 15th [1993]. So, I felt like I needed someone, or I needed something to help me. I went across the street to St. Patrick's Cathedral and I sat for a bit. And I'm glad I did…. Sitting there I felt this is such a beautiful place. And we have to thank God…. We have to thank God for what we still have and what we can still do.

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When men stop worshipping God, they promptly start worshipping man, with disastrous results. *George Orwell in the Observer (1945), Christianity Today, Vol. 33, no. 15.*

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**Revelation 4**-----

1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold,

a throne

**I. The appearance of God’s throne**

There is a “throne” set in heaven because God is sovereign—He rules over everything and everyone. The throne is described as “crystal clear (pure),” “fiery red (righteous anger),” and encircled by an “emerald rainbow (faithfulness),” because it is a throne of grace! God could simply remove rebellious man from earth with no chance to believe, but God gives mankind another opportunity.

His throne is a throne of grace, but it is the point of origin from which “the wrath of the Lamb” will proceed as well. Jesus is full of grace and truth.

**The throne…**

**1. Is in heaven**

set in heaven, and

**2. Is occupied by God the Father**

*One* sat on the throne. 3 ~~And He who sat there was~~

**3. Looks crystal clear and fiery red**

like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance;

**4. Is surrounded by an emerald rainbow**

and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

God’s throne is simultaneously a throne of wrath (fiery red) and a throne of grace (emerald rainbow).

**II. The surroundings of God’s throne**

God’s throne is surrounded by…

A. Redeemed humans that were loyal to God and served Him on earth and therefore have positions of authority and power in God’s presence.

**5. Is surrounded by 24 thrones occupied by 24 elders in white robes and gold laurels (4:4)**

**who cast their laurels before the throne and worship, giving reasons why God is  
 worthy to receive the worship of the living creatures (4:10-11)**

4 Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones,

and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting,

clothed in white robes;

and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

B. Manifestations of His power and magnificence

**6. Diffuses lightning, thunder, and voices**

5 And from the throne proceeded

lightnings, thunderings, and voices. (Seraphim [“holy”] and God’s voice)

(Paul heard things that could not be put into words.)

It is a throne of grace, but it is also a throne of wrath.

Don’t mess with Texas. Don’t mess with God, either.

**Exod 19:16**----16Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were [[1]](#footnote-1)uthunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who *were* in the camp [[2]](#footnote-2)vtrembled.

**Heb 12:21**----And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, [[3]](#footnote-3)c“*I am exceedingly afraid* and trembling.”

C. Illumination from the Spirit of God

**7. Has a menorah of 7 torches burning in front of it**(DIVINE INTERPRETATION: the seven Spirits of God)

Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne,

which are the seven Spirits of God.

Unlike earthly throne rooms, God’s throne room is not in the dark about anything. Perfect light is shed on everything before God’s eyes by the Spirit of God.

Fire symbolizes judgment. The Bible symbolizes God as a “consuming fire.” God will judge mankind with the perfect knowledge of all that sinful humans have done.

D. A supernatural calmness and purity

**8. Has a sea of glass like crystal around it**

6 Before the throne *there* *was* a sea of glass,

like crystal.

From Ezekiel 1, we learn that God’s throne-chariot also rests upon a sea of glass (transparent platform). There is power and magnificence as well as calmness and purity involved in God’s judgment on mankind.

E. Reflectors of His attributes and proclaimers of His holiness

**9. Has four living creatures covered with eyes in its midst and surrounding it**

Note: these are the SEPRAHIM (six wings/standing over God/holy [3X]) of Isaiah 6, not the CHERUBIM (four wings/ under the platform/next to the wheels) of Ezekiel 1.

And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures

full of eyes in front and in back.

7 The first living creature *was* like a lion,

the second living creature like a calf,

the third living creature had a face like a man,

and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle.   
8 The four living creatures,

each having six wings,

were full of eyes around and within.

And they do not rest day or night, saying:   
 “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” 9

Whenever [NOTE: their worship is continual] the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders

**humility**---fall down before Him who sits on the throne

**adoration**---and worship Him who lives forever and ever,

**gratitude**---and cast their crowns before the throne,   
 (see 5:10---"You have made us kings”)

---saying: 11 “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”

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**In Rev 5, we are still in God’s throne room but the emphasis shifts to a seven-sealed scroll in the hand of God (scroll---8X)**

1 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.

**Q: What scrolls were written on front and back in antiquity?**

**A: ?**

**--------**

2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice,

**“Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?”**

3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because

**no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.**

5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold,

**the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”**

6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying:

**“You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals;**

For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice:

**“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain**

To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!” 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

**“Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”**

14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

**Ezekiel 1**-----1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month,* on the fifth *day* of the month, as I *was* among the captives by the River Chebar, *that* **the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.** 2 On the fifth *day* of the month, which *was* in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin’s captivity, 3 the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was upon him there.

**Ezekiel’s Visions of God**

**From afar, God’s throne-chariot appears as a bright whirlwind and massive cloud made of fire.**

4 Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness *was* all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

**The Four Living Creatures** (= Cherubim, Ezek 10:15).   
In Ezekiel 10, God’s chariot-throne is outside the temple in Jerusalem.

**Four angelic creatures that look like humans are seen from within the fiery cloud each having four faces and four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were split in two like a cow’s hoof and sparkled with a shiny bronze color. They had human hands under each of their four wings and the wings of each creature touched the wings of the others. When the creatures moved, they did not turn but went straight forward, as directed by the spirit (see v. 12). Each creature had four faces—a man’s, a lion’s (on the right side), an ox’s (on the left side), and an eagle’s. Two of their wings stretched upward and touched the others and the other two covered their body. The creatures looked like burning coals of fire—like torches passing between the creatures. The fire was bright and lightning came out of it. The creatures ran back and forth like lightning flashes.**

5 Also from within it *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. 6 Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. 7 Their legs *were* straight, and the soles of their feet *were* like the soles of calves’ feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. 8 The hands of a man *were* under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. 9 Their wings touched one another. *The creatures* did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward. 10 As for the likeness of their faces, *each* had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. 11 Thus *were* their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two *wings* of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. 12 And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went. 13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. 14 And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning.

**The Wheels Next to the Living Creatures**

**Each living creature had a wheel within a wheel next to it that rested on planet earth. Each wheel was identical and beautiful in color. Like the living creatures, they went straight forward (N,S, E, W). When the creatures went up, the wheels did as well because the spirit of the living creatures was also in the wheels. Each of these wheels were very tall and covered in eyes. The massive firmament (platform) above the heads of the creatures was crystal clear and rested on their wings. As the creatures moved around, their wings sounded to Ezekiel like the sound of many waters, like the voice of God, like the shouting of an army in battle. When the living creatures stopped moving, they let down their wings.**

15 Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel *was* on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. 16 The appearance of the wheels and their workings *was* like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings *was,* as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. 17 When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. 18 As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims *were* full of eyes, all around the four of them. 19 When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. 20 Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels. 21 When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels. 22 The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures *was* like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. 23 And under the firmament their wings *spread out* straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. 24 When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings.

**Ezekiel heard a voice from above the crystal clear platform where there was a throne, deep blue (lapis-lazuli) in color. And on the throne was a massive, humanlike entity, that looked it was covered in fire. He was bright and looked like a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day. This is how the Lord’s glory looked to Ezekiel. When he saw this, he fell on his face and once again heard a voice** (Ezekiel 2 = God’s).

25 A voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings. 26 And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. 27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. 28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw *it,* I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

**Numbers 7:89**----89Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting [[4]](#footnote-4)cto speak with Him, he heard [[5]](#footnote-5)dthe voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that *was* on the ark of the Testimony, from [[6]](#footnote-6)ebetween the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.

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The idea that God’s presence was not limited to the temple was important for Ezekiel (and Israel) to understand. God’s glory moves from the temple to the throne-chariot before the temple is destroyed. It would still be available to Israel when they returned to Him. Also, as Heiser has pointed out, it was also a reminder to the captives that it was not Marduk or Baal on the throne, but Yahweh.

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1:5–8a. Ezekiel spotted **four living creatures** in the midst of **the fire**. These beings are identified in chapter 10 as cherubim, a special order of angelic beings. They have special access to God (cf. 28:14, 16) and are bearers of God’s throne-chariot. On the tabernacle’s ark of the covenant, gold images of cherubim, with outstretched wings, guarded the mercy seat where the glory of the Lord dwelt (Ex. 25:17–22; Num. 7:89). God was “enthroned between the cherubim” of the ark of the covenant (1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; Pss. 80:1; 99:1; Isa. 37:16). This place where God was enthroned was called “the chariot” (1 Chron. 28:18). Since the earthly tabernacle and temple were a copy of the heavenly reality (Heb. 8:5), Ezekiel’s vision was of the actual throne-chariot of God, borne by cherubim.[[7]](#footnote-7)

**Revelation 4**-----1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. 3 ~~And He who sat there was~~ like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. 4 Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 Before the throne *there* *was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”

**Revelation 5**-----1 And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” 6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!” 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power *Be* to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!” 14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

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After John had written to the pastors of the local churches, he saw a door open in heaven and was told he would be shown future events. In a divine trance, he sees God on His glorious throne, and all that surrounds it: 24 elders, manifestations of God’s power, God’s Spirit, and four angelic beings and the elders worshiping God for His holiness, His eternality, and his creation of all that exists. (4:1-11)

John sees a scroll with seven seals in the right hand of God. An angel asks who is worthy to open this scroll and its seals, and since no one in the universe is found worthy, John begins to cry. One of the elders tells John to stop weeping because a descendant of David from the tribe of Judah has conquered and is therefore worthy to execute God’s judgments (5:1-5).

John then sees Christ, the slaughtered Lamb, take the scroll from God’s right hand and sees the living creatures and the 24 elders fall down to worship the Lamb by singing a new song regarding the Lamb’s worthiness on the basis of His sacrificial death. John then hears all creation worship both the One on the throne and the Lamb, followed with worship by the living creatures and the 24 elders. (5:6-14)

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Rev 4:

God’s majestic throne (symbolizing God in His absolute authority over everything) is permeated by the worship of all that surrounds it because He is holy, eternal, and the Creator of all that has, does, or will exist.

1. u Heb. 12:18, 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. v Heb. 12:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. c Deut. 9:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. c [Ex. 33:9, 11]; Num. 12:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. d Ex. 25:21, 22 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. e Ps. 80:1; 99:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Charles H. Dyer, “Ezekiel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1228. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)