

With the beginning of Revelation 4 we are introduced to a new vision often referred to as the vision of the "seven seals." Who, why, how and when we worship are the key issues in the conflict portrayed in Revelation. In Revelation 4 and 5 our attention is focused upon our access to the throne of God, the worship of God and the reason why we worship God.



Q1 **Who was invited to "come up" to see further revelations of Jesus?** Revelation 4:1

A

Q2 **What immediately happened to John?** Revelation 4:2

A

These two verses also place before us the main themes of these chapters...

Q3 **What did John see in heaven?** Revelation 4:1

A

Q4 **What was John shown inside the open door?** Revelation 4:2

A

### The OPEN DOOR...

Jesus Christ the King placed before the believers in Philadelphia the doors of opportunity that no human could shut. (Revelation 3:7,8.) In these verses the believers in the seven churches were given more information. The "door standing open" is the door to the *THRONE* of heaven where Jesus and the Father reign.

### The THRONE...

The messages of Revelation come from the throne of heaven. We read, "John, to the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits (the sevenfold Spirit) before his *THRONE*, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, the ruler of the kings of the earth." Revelation

1:4,5. In these verses we read of the Father, the Holy Spirit before the throne and Jesus Christ. We read of the same eternal Beings and the throne in Revelation 4 and 5. In fact, in these chapters the word "throne" occurs 17 times in the Greek. It is one of the key words of Revelation, occurring 39 times.

This vision which reveals the open door, the throne, the Lamb and the opening of the seven seals was given to the seven churches for the whole Christian Church and believers in every age. Here in chapter 4 is an expansion of the pictures of the *THRONE*, the *KING* and the *KINGDOM* in Revelation 1-3. Here is encouragement and consolation for struggling and often suffering believers. Here is salvation and encouragement for you.■

### THE ONE ON THE THRONE

The throne room of heaven was open to John's gaze. Other prophets before him had received visions of this throne room and the similarity of their descriptions should be noted. (Read Psalm 97:1-4; Isaiah 6:1-3; Ezekiel 1 and 10; and Daniel 7:9-13,26 and 27.)■



Q5 **How did the One *ON THE THRONE* appear to John?** Revelation 4:3

A

These are beautiful red stones and gems. In Scripture, God is sometimes portrayed as being clothed in red. This is symbolic of His royal position as King, Judge and Redeemer. (See Isaiah 63:1-4 and Ezekiel 1:27,28.) Encircling the throne was an emerald green rainbow. Like the rainbow after the flood this could be symbolic of God's mercy and justice. (See Genesis 9:12-17.)

The whiteness of their clothes symbolises the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The crowns symbolise the victory they have gained through Jesus Christ. The fact that they are on thrones reveals they have been made kings. They are believers. However, they are not all the believers for they minister on behalf of those believers still on earth.

It is interesting to note that many believers were raised from the dead at the time of our Lord's death and resurrection. (Matthew 27:51-53.) When Jesus Christ ascended to heaven He took some with Him as trophies of His victory over death. (Ephesians 4:8.) Perhaps they are the 24 elders seated on thrones before the THRONE.



Q8 **What came *FROM THE THRONE*?** Revelation 4:5

A

These are emblems of the presence and judgement of God. (See Exodus 19:16; Revelation 8:5; 11:19 and 16:17-19.)

Q9 **What did John see *BEFORE THE THRONE*? Who were represented by what he saw?** Revelation 4:5,6

A What?

Who?

Q10 **What did John see "in the centre, *AROUND THE THRONE*"?** Revelation 4:6

A

Q6 **What did John see *SURROUNDING THE THRONE*?** Revelation 4:4

A

Q7 **What are we told about the 24 elders?**

A Revelation 4:4

1. Seated on

2. Clothed in

3. Wearing

Revelation 5:8

4. Ministering for

What other details were given concerning these "four living creatures"?

Q11 **What other details were given concerning these "four living creatures"?**

A Revelation 4:6 Each was covered with

Revelation 4:4 They were like

Revelation 4:8 They had

These creatures are cherubim or heavenly messengers. (Compare Ezekiel 1 and 10.) Their covering of eyes is possibly a reference to their insight and intelligence. Their faces represent the people of God whom they serve. Parallels have also been seen between the four faces and the descriptions of our Lord's ministry given by

the four Gospel writers. Their wings are perhaps a reference to the swiftness of their service. The glory, holiness and greatness of the *ONE ON THE THRONE* draws praise, honour and service from all the beings of heaven.

## **PRAISE TO THE ONE ON THE THRONE...**



Q12 **What do the living creatures never stop saying?** Revelation 4:8. (Compare Isaiah 6:1-4.)

A

Q13 **Why do the elders praise the Lord God?** Revelation 4:9-11

A

Heaven is a place of joy. The focal point of attention, and the object of all praise in this chapter is the *ONE ON THE THRONE*. He is the *CREATOR*.

## **THE LAMB "IN THE CENTRE OF THE THRONE"...**



Q14 **What did John see "in the right hand of him who sat on the throne"?** Revelation 5:1

A

Such a perfectly, seven-sealed scroll would have reminded the first readers of a Roman will or legal document. Such a "last will and testament" could not be carried into effect or executed until the testator died and all the seals were opened.

Q15 **What important question was raised by a mighty angel?** Revelation 5:2

A

Initially no one in heaven or on earth responded. (Revelation 5:3.) John wept. (Revelation 5:4.) Obviously that which was sealed up concerned God's will for, and the destiny of, the human race. Only a perfect one could open the perfectly-sealed scroll or will. And, of course, it could not be opened until the death of the testator.

Q16 **After the distressing interval of verses 2-4 what good news was John given by one of the elders?** Revelation 5:5

A

Q17 **When John looked expecting to see "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" what did he actually see?** Revelation 5:6

A

## **JESUS the "LION"...**

Jesus is King, Judge and Avenger. He is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." (See Genesis 49:9,10 and compare Isaiah 11:1,10; Matthew 21:9 and Revelation 22:16.) He is worthy to open the sealed book for He has "triumphed" over Satan and death. (See Colossians 2:15 and Revelation 5:6.)

## **JESUS the "LAMB"...**

Jesus Christ is King, Priest and Redeemer. He is the "Lamb." (See Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29 and 1 Peter 1:18,19.) The seven horns represent His perfect kingly authority. The seven eyes represent the Holy Spirit.

This seven-sealed book has to do with our salvation and judgement. Jesus Christ was worthy to open the perfectly sealed will of God for He had triumphed over Satan and death. He is perfect. Jesus Christ was able to open the book for He had died and had risen to ascend to the throne. He is our risen, living Saviour!



Q18 **Revelation 5:7 is the climax of this scene involving the Father, the Holy Spirit and Jesus at the THRONE. What did Jesus do?** Revelation 5:7

A

The taking of the scroll is a symbol of Christ's exaltation and enthronement after His ascension to the Father. (See Philippians 2:9-11.) When our Saviour died the veil between the holy place and the most holy place in the Jerusalem temple was torn open. (Matthew 27:50,51.) By His death, Jesus Christ brought the earthly sanctuary system to an end and opened the way for all to enter the most holy presence of the Father in heaven. (Hebrews 4:14-16 and 9:11-14.) His death as the sinless Saviour purchased salvation from sin and

death for all who will accept it by faith. He arose from the grave victorious over Satan and death. Jesus Christ ascended to the *THRONE* to act for us as our Redeemer and Avenger, our Priest and Judge.

## PRAISE TO JESUS CHRIST...



Q19 **What was heaven's immediate response to Jesus Christ taking the scroll?** Revelation 5:8-14

A

In Revelation 4 the Lord is worshipped as *CREATOR*. In Revelation 5 the Lord is worshipped as *SAVIOUR*. These themes dominate Scripture. Both creation and salvation are the perfect works of God. Both are gifts from God. These songs of praise would have reminded the first readers of the Sabbath rest given to them by Jesus. (Matthew 12:8 and Mark 2:27,28.) The Sabbath was a memorial to the Lord's work of *CREATION* and *SALVATION*. (See Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15 and Ezekiel 20:12,20.)

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# response...

## The Door is Open ...

Jesus Christ, our perfect Saviour, has ascended to the *THRONE*. All power is given to Him for He has purchased men and women with His blood. No longer can it be said that God has ignored the problem of sin and suffering. The "door" is open for us to enter the most holy presence of the Father through Jesus, our only High Priest, through prayer. Therefore, "Since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. . . 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." Hebrews 4:14,16 NIV. (Also read 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:1,2; 9:11,12; 10:19-21.)

## Worship ...

Jesus Christ has dealt with the sin problem by His death. He offers us the gift of eternal life. All heaven responded to the work of our Saviour by worshipping Him before His *THRONE*. Worship is a crucial issue in Revelation and we are given two reasons for the worship of God. He is our *CREATOR* and our *SAVIOUR*. The word "worship" occurs 24 times in the book. It deals with who we worship, why we worship, how we worship and when we worship. Worship involves not only singing and praying but also our service and obedience to God.



**We have the privilege of approaching our God in prayer and worship. When and how do you think you may praise God and pray each day?**