



– an uncluttered approach –

SIMPLIFYING

REVELATION



- In ch. 4-5, the veil is pulled back and we are allowed to see into the throne room of God!
- John sees several images in and around the throne which we will consider, plus a scroll with seven seals upon it, which becomes the catalyst for chapters 6-7.
- 4:1-2 – John was *“in the Spirit.”*
 - This was a vision, a dream, a trance.
 - He was not physically in the throne room (such is impossible, since it is a spiritual place).
- 4:3 – the throne is described.
 - The intent is not to give a physical description. It is an image to convey character.
 - **JASPER** – later in the book, jasper is used to convey the glory of the new Jerusalem (21:11).
 - **SARDIUS** isn't used elsewhere, but if the clear look of

the jasper represents God's glory, perhaps the fiery red of the sardius represents His justice.

- **RAINBOW** – there is a rainbow *“around the throne.”*

- Ezek 1:28 describes God's throne, *“...like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day...”*
- Recall the first rainbow (Gen 9:12-16). God keeps His promises.
- The rainbow is representative of His faithfulness.

- **EMERALD** – emerald is soft green.

- Barnes says it is the predominant colour in the rainbow.
 - In Rev 21, emerald is part of the foundation of the new Jerusalem.
 - It has been suggested by some commentators the emerald is representative of God's mercy (though there is no text that would corroborate such).
- If the emerald image is correct, in looking at the Lord's throne, John saw the glory, justice, faithfulness & mercy of God.

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS

“clothed in white robes”

REVELATION 3:5, 18

“crowns of gold on their heads”

REVELATION 2:10; 3:11

“fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him”

REVELATION 11:1; 14:7

“each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense”

REVELATION 5:8; 8:4



- 4:4 – the 24 elders are mentioned several times in the book. No text specifically says who they are, but there are certainly clues about their identity.
- 4:4 – **CLOTHED IN WHITE** robes.
- 4:4 – **CROWNS OF GOLD**.
- 4:10, etc – **WORSHIP GOD**.
- 5:8 – **HARPS & GOLDEN BOWLS**.
- These same attributes are found about a distinct group of people – God’s people.
 - **REVELATION 3:5, 18** – Christians are clothed in white.
 - **REVELATION 2:10; 3:11** – Christians are promised crowns of gold.
 - **REVELATION 11:1; 14:7** – Christians are pictured worshiping God.
 - **REVELATION 5:8; 8:4** – Christians are pictured with harps

& golden bowls

- If these 24 elders are representative of God's people, why 24?
 - Why not 7, or 10? Or 23, or some other number?
 - Numbers convey ideas.
 - There are not literally 24 people in God's presence.
 - $24 = 12 + 12$. Recall, 12 is important in Revelation. It is the number of God's people.
 - National Israel is characterized by the 12 tribes;
 - The church had its beginning with the 12 apostles.
 - Combine the two and you have the image of the 24 elders.

activity

IN AND AROUND THE THRONE



EXODUS 37:23
SEVEN
lamps | spirits



...from the throne proceeded
lightning, thunderings and voices...

COMPARE WITH EXODUS 19:16, 19; 20:18-19

- 4:5 reveals the activity in and around the throne.
 - The activity described is similar to what caused Israel to tremble at **MOUNT SINAI**.
 - The **SEVEN LAMPS** of fire is used to represent the Holy Spirit.
 - Like the sights & sounds described, this may be a reference to an OT image – the **GOLDEN LAMPSTAND** in the temple.
- 4:6 – John describes a sea of glass, like crystal.
 - This may represent the cleansing which allows one to come to God.
 - The priests of the Old Covenant washed in a great molten sea prepared by Solomon (1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Chronicles 4:2-5).
 - In the New Covenant, baptism is essential for one to

come to the Lord (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21).

- When we get to the new heaven and earth (21:1), there is “no more sea.” Only those who are already washed and belong to God are there.

FOUR LIVING CREATURES

...Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come! (REVELATION 4:8; cf. ISAIAH 6:3)

LION	CALF	MAN	EAGLE
Majesty, authority, power	Tenderness, perfection	Intelligence, reason, conscience	Swift, graceful



SIX WINGS | **full of eyes around and within**

- 4:6 – John also saw 4 living creatures. They are found throughout the book (4:6-9; 5:6-8; 6:1; 7:11; 8:9; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4; etc.)
- These creatures are perpetually declaring the praise of God.
 - The **DESCRIPTION** is similar to seraphim (Isa 6:1-3) & cherubim (Eze 1:4-11; 10:1-22), but not the same.
 - They could be another class of angel, but part of the description should lead us in another direction.
- Verse 6 – the 4 living creatures are “...*in the midst of the throne, and around the throne...*”
 - Who is permitted on a king’s throne but the king himself?
 - Rather than these 4 living creatures being angels, it is quite possible they are representations of God’s character.

- **THE LION**, displaying His majesty and authority.
 - **THE CALF**, representing perfection & tenderness;
 - **THE MAN**, indicating intelligence, reason & conscience;
 - **THE EAGLE**, revealing speed and grace.
- V 8 – these 4 creatures **CONSTANTLY GIVE GLORY AND HONOR** to God.

YOU HAVE CREATED ALL THINGS



- verses 9-11
 - The 4 creatures (God's attributes) give Him glory, honour perpetually.
 - The 24 elders (Christians) worship God perpetually.
- The beginning point for their praise to God is His power as displayed in creation.
 - He is the reason why we are here.
 - He is the reason why we continue to be here.
- As we transition from ch. 4 to ch. 5, the focus moves from the glory of the Father to the glory of the Son.

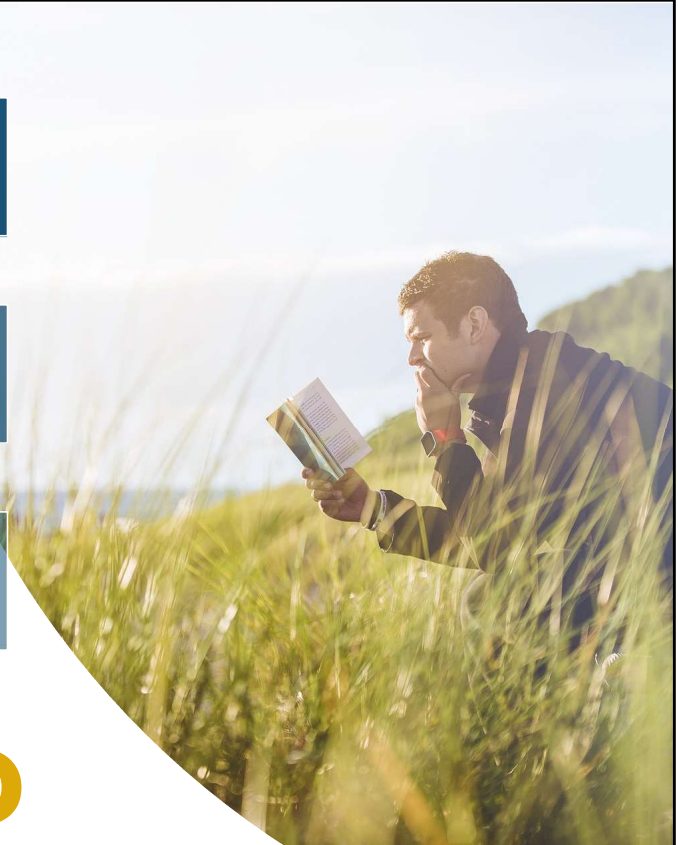
- ❖ the Lamb
- ❖ the Root of Jesse
- ❖ the Lion of the tribe of Judah

SEALS



- The Father had a scroll in His right hand.
 - “Written inside and on the back.” It is full, nothing more to be recorded; it is complete.
 - But who is worthy to open it? (v 2)
 - No one in heaven or on earth or under the earth.
 - In fact, none were worthy to look at it (v 3).
 - This caused John to weep (v 4).
- V 5-6 – one of the elders spoke to John – there was someone who was worthy.
 - **THE LION** of the tribe of Judah – an image stretching back to Gen 49 concerning the Messiah.
 - **THE ROOT** of Jesse – from Isaiah 11, concerning the Messiah.
 - This Lion of the tribe of Judah, and Root of Jesse had prevailed (Gr. Nike).

- **THE LAMB**, an image used to refer to the Christ (Isa 53; Jn 1)
- V 6 – He is described as being “...in the midst of...”
 - The throne (He is God, He sits with His Father on His throne);
 - The four living creatures (they characterize both the Father & Son);
 - The 24 elders (they praise the Son, just as they praise the Father).
- V 6 – the Lamb...
 - Had been slain. He is our sacrifice.
 - Had seven horns. Perfect power & authority. Horns are used to speak of authority or kingdoms (Dan 7:24; 8:3, 20; Hab 3:4; Rev 13:1; 17:12).
 - Had seven eyes (the 7 Spirits of God). The 7 eyes are associate the Holy Spirit with the Son of God. We’ve noted previous Jesus’ association with the Spirit.

A photograph of a man in a dark jacket and light-colored shirt, standing in a field of tall grass. He is holding an open book and looking down at it. The background shows a bright sky and distant hills.

The 24 elders (who have the harps & golden bowls of incense)

Many angels, the four living creatures & the 24 elders

Every creature in heaven, on the earth & in the sea

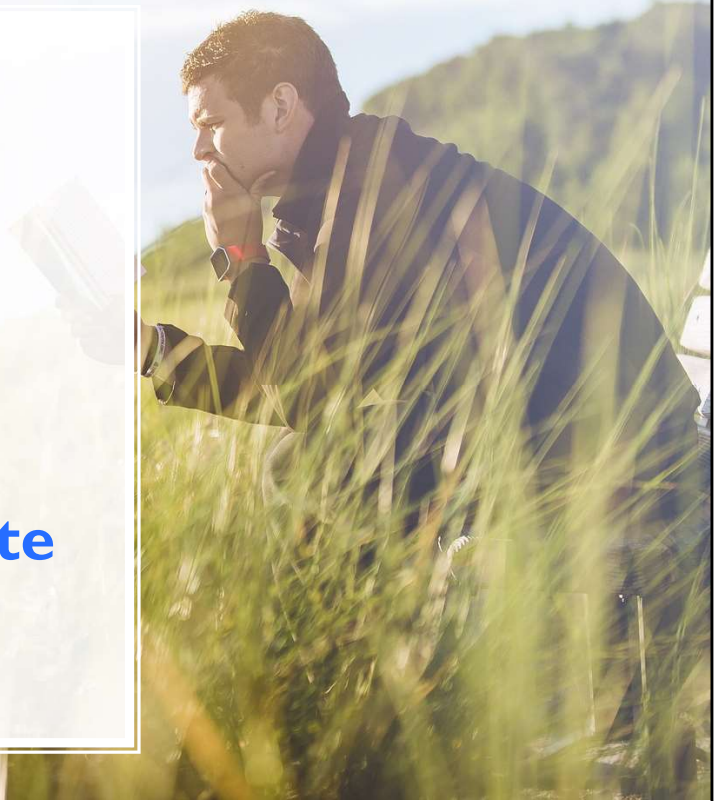
praises to **GOD**

- V 7 – Jesus took the scroll from the Father’s hand.
- There are 3 occasions of praise that result from the Lamb’s ability to open the scroll.
- **THE 24 ELDERS** (v 8), who have the harps & golden bowls full of incense (prayers) sing a new song (v 9-10).
 - They extol Him as worth to take the scroll & to open it;
 - Why? Because He was slain & redeemed them to God;
 - He had made them a kingdom of priests to reign with Him.
- **THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN** and the 4 living creatures join in the praise (v 11-12).
 - A huge number are described as participating.
 - They praise the Lamb, identifying 7 things:
 - Worthy to receive (1) power, (2) riches, (3) wisdom, (4) strength, (5) honor, (6) glory and (7) blessing.

- **THEN EVERY CREATURE** in heaven and on earth joined in (v 13-14).
 - They declare (1) Blessing and (2) honor and (3) glory and (4) power unto the Father and the Lamb.
 - Four things – to the corners of the earth. The extent of His reign.

SUMMARY OF THE **THRONE ROOM**

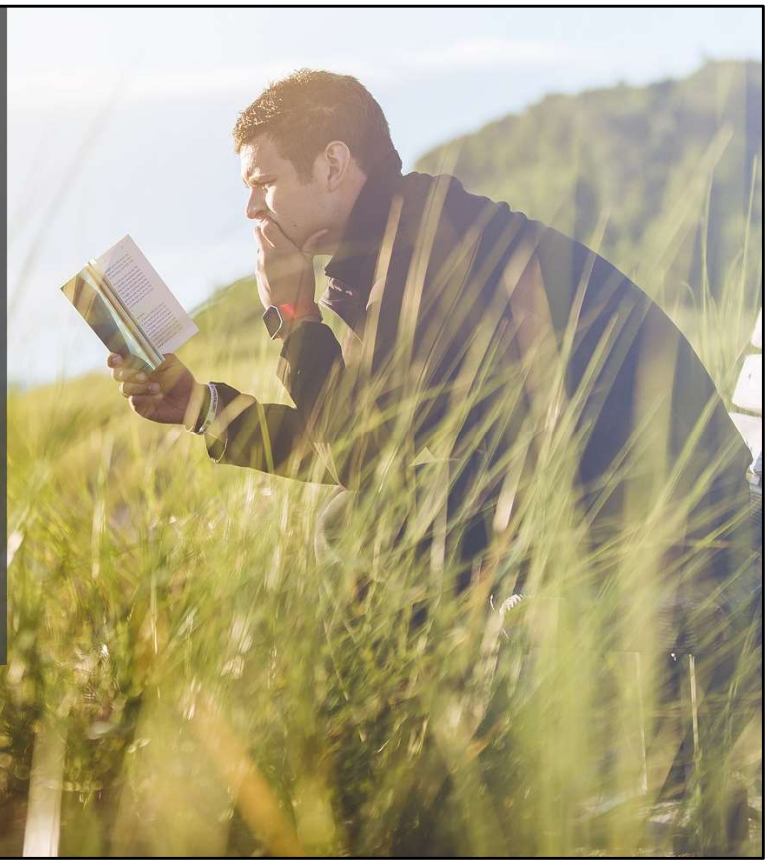
- The 24 elders are **God's people**
- The 4 living creatures are **God's character**
- The sealed scroll is **complete**
- The Lion, Root & Lamb are **Jesus Christ**



Next week...

❖ From the throne room
in heaven to the harsh
reality of life on earth

REVELATION 6-7



closing
SONG

466

