

*The book of
Revelation*

4:4-11

Welcome to the weekly verse-by-verse bible study in the book of Revelation.
Make sure you pray before you start this, or any bible study.

Last week, here in chapter 4, we left the earth and entered into the throne room of God, where we actually caught a glimpse of God and His throne.
This week we will continue here in heaven looking at the things going on there.

✠ **Rev 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.*

There are a few things that these 24 elders can represent.

First is that they are the 12 patriarchs of the Old Testament and the 12 disciples of the New Testament. Second is that they are representatives of 24 churches. Last is that they are created beings like angels and cherub's. Is there another possibility? Yes, there always are other possibilities with God in control, because we tend to think on earthly terms and not heavenly terms.

So which is correct? I don't know. I know it sounds like a copout, but I will not lead you into something that may be wrong, so we will just have to find out when we get there.

But there are a few things we can look at about them, and compare them to in the bible.

First they are: *clothed in white robes*

We read about this further on in the book of Revelation in chapter 19 it says.

✠ **Rev 19:7-8** *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

We (the church) as the bride of Christ will be clothed in fine linen that is clean and bright: *to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

Second is: *they had crowns of gold on their heads.*

We also will receive crowns in heaven:

✠ **James 1:12** *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

† **1 Peter 5:4** *and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

The priests also wore a crown of gold:

† **Ex 39:30** *Then they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription like the engraving of a signet: **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.***

So, whoever these 24 elders are, they will be holy and righteous before God, but as we will read in this chapter that it is not because of their own righteousness or holiness, but rather because of Jesus’.

✠ **Rev 4:5** *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.*

Whenever I read this, the first thing I think about is the movie The Wizard of Oz. But in the movie, the wizard was a fake and a normal human just like us. The only difference was that he had cool special effects to hide behind.

But that’s not the case with God, there is only one God and we are reading about Him here in the bible. These are not special effects to make God seem holy and all powerful, these things are happening because God IS Holy and All-powerful.

We have all been in a thunderstorm at one time or another, whether we were stuck outside in it, or were under the protection of our homes. When the lightning flashes, we are in awe of what we see. But when the thunder rumbles through the sky, we all jump and shake because of the awesomeness of the power behind it. Now imagine for a moment that all of this going on, with no rain, mind you, but instead voices mixed in with it.

Who will be able to stand before our awesome God on that Day of Judgment?

NO ONE!

So many think that they will and will have all sorts of questions for God, questioning what He has done. But when they are before the throne of God, all their questions and rebukes towards God will all fade away as they realize His awesomeness.

ALL will bow down before the throne of God and truly realize how wrong they were and how right God is.

We are so quick to judge others and God, and so many times we base our judgment upon what we want, rather than what the bible says. So next time you decide to judge God or someone else and get upset with them because they are not doing things your way, stop and ask God if you are right in your judgment or if He needs to change your heart.

Remember what Jesus said?

† **Luke 6:37** *Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.*

† **Matt 7:1-5** *Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

Yes, there is a righteous judgment that we should judge with, but there is also a righteous forgiveness that we should also forgive with as well. ***Forgive, and you will be forgiven.***

If God, in all His righteousness and awesomeness can forgive, shouldn't we do the same as well! If God needs to change someone, He will, but we are not God, so let's stop trying to form people into the image of ourselves, and let God mold them into the image of His Son Jesus Christ!

✠ *Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

Remember the number seven represents a completeness and the lamps of fire represent the Holy Spirit.

† **Acts 2:3-4** *Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

† **Matt 25:1-4** *Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

Therefore, here in Revelation, this would represent the Holy Spirit in His complete workings. What are those complete workings? They can be found in:

† **Isaiah 11:2** *The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.*

Oh that we would pray everyday that the Holy Spirit would work these things through us as well.

✠ **Rev 4:6-8** *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. 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. 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!"*

The sea of glass would represent the calmness and tranquility in heaven, unlike the earth that is full of pandemonium, chaos and uneasiness.

✠ *And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 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. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within.*

If you are reading from the KJV it calls these living creatures “beasts”, but the correct term would be what we have in the NKJV, which is “living creatures”.

Also if you read in the book of Ezekiel, we have a more detailed description of the four living creatures.

✠ **Ezek 1:6-25** *Ezekiel 1:6-25 Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. 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. The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward. 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. Thus were their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went. 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. And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning. Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. 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. When they moved,*

they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims were full of eyes, all around the four of them. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.

Can you say wow! I can hardly wait to see this in heaven.

So what does this all mean or what do they represent?

Some think of the four faces as representatives of the four gospels:

Matthew presents Jesus as the *lion* of the tribe of Judah.

Mark presents Jesus as a *calf*, a beast of burden representing a suffering servant.

Luke presents Jesus as the Son of *Man*.

John presents Jesus as the Son of God, the *eagle* representing the Divinity.

✠ *And they do not rest day or night, saying:
"Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!"*

We are used to singing the first two lines:

*Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,*

But there is one more line to the song that we don't sing, but we will when we are in heaven, so you should learn it now.

Who was and is and is to come!

Holy, holy, holy, could represent the three in one person of the Godhead:

Holy God

Holy Jesus

Holy, Holy Spirit

Lord God Almighty,

There is only one God and He is Most Awesome and Powerful; El Shaddai,

✠ ***Who was and is and is to come!***

God always has been, always is, and always will be. God knows all past (***was***), present (***is***) and future (***is to come***). God is in control of all things past (***was***), present (***is***) and future (***is to come***).

I worry a lot sometimes, and I think it would be safe to say that you do as well. But the reason we worry is that we try to control everything ourselves, and when it gets to tough for us, that's when we call on God to help us out. But we should realize that no matter what we have been through (***was***) whatever we are going through (***is***) or whatever may come our way (***is to come***) God is right there with us and in control of all situations.

✠ ***Rev 4:9-11 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 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:
"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."***

We read this and think that this is a one-time occurrence, but if you read it in the context, it's not that way at all.

✠ ***And they do not rest day or night, saying:
"Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!"
Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him***

To me as I read this, it tells me that it is a continual thing that is happening in heaven. Think about that for a minute, and think of our prayers:

✠ ***Luke 11:2 So He said to them, "When you pray, say:
Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.***

If God's will in heaven is to be continually praised, shouldn't we be doing this also here on the earth?

"But I can't sing all day. I have a job to do, or kids to take care of, or others that need me. So how can I continually praise God all day?"

We often associate praise towards God as singing, and it is one form of praise, but there is more to praise than just singing.

- † **Psalms 51:16-17** *For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart-- These, O God, You will not despise.*
- † **Hosea 6:6** *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*
- † **Heb 10:5 (NLT)** *That is why Christ, when he came into the world, said, "You did not want animal sacrifices and grain offerings. But you have given me a body so that I may obey you."*
- † **Psalms 34:1-2** *I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and be glad.*
- † **Psalms 50:23** *Whoever offers praise glorifies Me; And to him who orders his conduct aright I will show the salvation of God."*
- † **Psalms 71:14-19** *But I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more and more. My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day, For I do not know their limits. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only. O God, You have taught me from my youth; And to this day I declare Your wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come. Also Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You?*
- † **Psalms 119:117** *Hold me up, and I shall be safe, And I shall observe Your statutes continually.*

I hope you are getting the idea here, that praise to God is more than just singing, but also how we live our lives and treat others. Therefore, you can praise God continually all day

and all night in song and by living the way He wants us to live, and by treating others the way He treats them.

✠ ***"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."***

God is so totally worthy of our praise because of the things He has done and even the things He is doing right now in your life. We don't always understand what we are going through, but we should understand that God ***created all things, and by His will they exist and were created.***

If God knew how to create all things, don't you think He also knows how to take care of all things, including you and me with all our problems? But then for us they may seem like problems, but for God they are no sweat.

So let's tell God everyday that ***"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power."***

Will somebody say Amen to that!

Well, that's it for this week. We made it through another chapter in the book of Revelation. Next week we will start in chapter 5. Here in chapter 4 we saw the throne room of God and caught a glimpse of God in all His glory. Next week we get to see our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in all His glory in heaven.

May the Lord richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy and may praise be on your lips continually for our God!