

# **CHRIST APOSTELIC CHURCH OF PENNSYLVANIA [Mount of Redemption]**

**5200 PASCHALL AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143. P. O. Box 2294, Upper Darby, PA 19082**

**TEL/FAX: (215) 724- 5711**

## **BIBLE STUDY**

April 11, 2012

### **COURSE OUTLINE: REVELATION Chapter 4**

We have completed the study of the seven churches, now we will see the door of heaven opened. This chapter begins a new phase in the book of Revelation.

The church plays a prominent role in the first three chapters, mentioned over 18 times. After chapter 3, the church is not referred to again until chapter 22 verse 16.

Chapter 1 was about the past where chapters 2 and 3 were about the present. (John's Day) From Revelation chapter 4 to 22 is all about the future.

#### **Let's read verses 1 - 11**

Some believe that verse 1 teaches about the Rapture

The door signifies entrance by way of revelation into heaven. The command "Come up hither" probably does not refer specifically to the Rapture, but rather to the change in scene for John who is to receive revelation about future events. This begins the final section of the book describing the events that follow the church age.

Let us see what these Bible references tell us about this event that will happen: Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:52, and I Thessalonians 4:16-17. This will happen so quickly that you would not even have time to blink your eye.

The "I" in verse 1 is of course John who is writing this. Jesus has been speaking in the previous chapters directly. Now we hear from John about the things he saw. This is after Jesus finishes His messages to the seven churches.

We will see the number "seven" throughout Revelation. Seven means "spiritually complete". Perhaps in this number, God is saying, this is it. There is nothing else to read. If you can't get the message in Revelation, you cannot receive it.

When John looked toward heaven, the door of heaven is open. Jesus is the door to heaven. The door of heaven is not closed to the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus opened the way to the very throne of God, when the temple curtain was torn from the top to the bottom (opening the way to the holy of holies), when He died on the cross, Matthew 27:51.

The word "looked" is important also in verse 1. We must seek before we can find. Jesus is coming back for those who are looking for Him.

Notice, this door was "opened" is in the past tense. Jesus opened it for all believers already. Heaven is presently the dwelling place of God. It will also be our eternal home.

There are several other instances in the Bible where the door of heaven was opened. Many prophets, also, have seen a vision of the heavenly.

Ezekiel saw similar picture in Ezekiel chapter 1: 26 – 28. Daniel and Stephen also had a glimpse of heaven. When Stephen looked into heaven, he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Jesus is seated at the right hand because His work is completed and I believe also that He stands to receive His faithful servants home.

This door has never been closed to the true believers.

When the Lord calls us to meet Him in the air, when the church is caught away, we will hear the trumpet!

The voice that John heard was like a trumpet. This is a powerful voice; it gives a true sound. This voice is talking to us, as well as John.

The voice said, "come up hither" to John. The same voice spoke to Moses when he was called up to Mt Sinai to receive divine direction in Ex 19: 20-24. The voice is always saying to us, "come up hither". Get your mind off the things of this world and look heavenward. The call of Jesus has always been "come!"

Jesus, the voice (in red letters) says, "I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." John will be shown a look into the future. Notice that these things of the hereafter must be. Why must they be? Because God ordered it from the beginning of the world and God never changes. We must change to fit His plan, not the other way around.

John is not told a specific time in the hereafter, only that it will be later than the present time he is in. John is now seeing into the future.

John was changed or transported, instantly and he saw the "jasper and sardine stone" which were the most precious of all stones. The beauty of God was so dazzling that John could not describe Him. God lives in light that no man can approach. His reflected brilliance is described as these precious stones.

The jasper was the last and the sardine the first stone in the breastplate worn by the high priest, Exodus 28:17-20. These stones are in the foundation of the New Jerusalem, Revelation 21:19-20.

These stones are known for their clearness and brightness. There was a diamond between the breastplate and the heart of the high priest. The emerald is another precious stone, green in color. Green means "earthly or of the earth". The emerald was also part of the breastplate, and of the foundation of New Jerusalem.

The value of these three different stones is greater than other stones. These are classified as precious stones and are very expensive.

This rainbow around the throne of God reminds us of His covenant with Noah after the Flood. This is important because God gave us the rainbow as a constant reminder of His grace. Without God's grace and mercy we would never have a chance to see heaven much less inhabit it.

The twenty-four seats in verse 4 were actually thrones. Miniature thrones in authority, subordinate to God, but nevertheless they surround the throne of God.

The twenty-four elders who represent the redeemed in heaven acknowledge that humans were created by God for His good pleasure.

The "lightnings and thunderings" in verse 5 showed the majesty and awesomeness of God. Lightning, earthquakes, and thunderings throughout the Bible have been an outward proclamation of God. Even at the foot of Mount Sinai the people were afraid of God, because of just such manifestations.

The "seven lamps" are a symbolic number covering all the workings of the Spirit of God.

The seven spirits of God refers to the seven eyes of the Lord or characteristics of God. (Zech. 4:10 and Isaiah 11:2) "the seven Spirits" mean the entirety of the power of the Spirit is manifest there at the throne. Fire throughout the Bible has been symbolic of God, as in the burning bush, Exodus 3:2. In Hebrews 12:28-29, we are told to serve God with reverence and Godly fear, because God is a consuming fire.

We do not completely understand God, but we must accept and trust God. This Spirit of God which is burning is to illuminate the minds and spirits of all who will accept it. Jesus is the Light. Somehow, all three are present in these lamps (Spirit) that illuminate.

All around the throne were the four beasts or "living beings". The number "four" shows the universality of these beasts or living beings. In Isaiah 6:2-13 and in Ezekiel 1: 22 - 23, these living beings are also called "seraphim" and "cherabim". These beasts, or living beings, surrounding the throne are full of eyes which means their wisdom was overwhelming.

The 4 Beasts or living Creatures are probably angels who guard the throne of God. The eyes symbolize wisdom, and the wings depict movement. They worship God as did the seraphim in Isaiah's vision. (Isaiah 6 v.1-3) The lion represents strength, (Psalms 103 v.20) The calf service, (Heb.1 v.14) The face of a man intelligence, (Luke 2 v.52) and the eagle swiftness. (Dan 9 v.21) The angelic vision has a strong allusion to Ezekiel 1 v.4-14.

The eyes denote wisdom or intelligence. These beings looking "before and behind" means they look back into times past and, also, look forward into things to come. These living ones, or living beings, also denote the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These books truly are full of wisdom. Some scholars believe that the four living beings show the four gospels.

- Matthew: Jesus is shown as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

- Mark: Jesus is shown as the servant of man (calf).
- Luke: Jesus is shown as a man.
- John: Jesus is shown as God (eagle).

Even though the four gospels tell the same story in essence, they also show four different personalities. You can easily see why these beasts, living beings, are symbolically the four gospels.

**Holy, holy, holy!** This is the cry of these heavenly creatures in verse 8 who know God as He really is. It has been suggested that each "holy" is directed to one of the members of the Trinity. Then these creatures remind us of the One who "is to come." The return of Christ is guaranteed in the words of these heavenly hosts. In Acts 1:9-11 angelic beings describe how Christ will literally return "in like manner as ye have seen him go". Here these angels in heaven reaffirm that promise.

The six wings spoken of in Isaiah 6 seem to show humility, obedience, and reverence to God.

The "which was, and is, and is to come" just furthers that thought and shows us the eternity of this three in one. We do know from 1 John 5:7 that there are three in heaven. **"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."**

The glory and honor and thanks given to God in verse 9 are a never ending. The four gospels have proclaimed this in the past, are proclaiming it now, and will proclaim it for all of eternity. The eternity of God is so difficult for us to understand because our minds are programmed to just limited years here on the earth.

**Verse 10: The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,**

At the presence of God it is a normal thing to fall down prostrate at His feet. The "four and twenty elders fall down before" shows their great humility at the presence of God. A deep respect and honor should be given God.

The word "worship" has been misunderstood by so many. We sing about it in our songs and use it in our prayers. Do we truly know how to worship? Our churches call Sunday services, worship, but again, very little true worship goes on. The word that was translated "worship" here means "absolute reverence to God, to adore Him". Absolute humility and adoration of God is what worship really means. Do we go to church to humbly worship and adore our God?

Why do the 24 elders "cast their crowns before the throne"? These crowns are the victorious crowns that Jesus has placed on their head. They, or we, have done nothing to earn the crown. These crowns belong to Jesus, not us. He won the victory. He placed them on our heads. Everyone benefits from the victory, but Jesus won it. This is

another act of humility on the part of these elders. When they throw the crowns at Jesus' feet, they are telling Him that they are His because He won them.

**Verse 11: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**

We see here the worthiness of God and why He should be praised. The earth and all that's on it, was created for God's pleasure. He created us so that He could fellowship with us. We are to Jesus like our children are to us. They are great joy, but at the very same time, they can bring us hurt. The joy far outweighs the hurt. Perhaps that is the way it is with God dealing with us. The joy outweighs the sorrow. We see here that the whole universe was created for God.

**GIVE GLORY TO GOD ALMIGHTY!**

References:

- Holy Bible - King James Version
- <http://www.discoverrevelation.com/>
- <http://www.sacred-texts.com/>
- <http://www.biblrytr.com/>

**Bible Study is on Wednesday's, from 7pm-9pm. Remain blessed as you come in Jesus Name.**