

Through the Door of Heaven

The Heavenly Scene of Revelation 4

^{Rev 4:1} After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

² At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne.

³ And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.

⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God,

⁶ and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:

⁷ the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight.

⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within...

(Revelation 4:1-8a)

Doors

A couple of summers ago, I was approached to go to [Israel](#) to be part of a documentary on the Nephilim. One day during that trip we took a tour of [Jerusalem](#) to film some stock footage for the movie. It was my second time in the Holy City, but this time I was struck for some reason with [the doors of the city](#). In fact, I began to obsess a little over it, taking pictures of dozens of them. There were doors of all colors, shapes, sizes, material. Some were solid, others were barred, others were intricately woven into patterns. Some were single. Some were double. Some were plain. Some were highly stylish. I couldn't get it out of my head, "[Where on earth do you go to order a door for Jerusalem?](#)" Clearly not KB Homes or The Home Depot.

Many of these doors were protecting private residences. Some seemed to have been hiding closets or perhaps electrical rooms. Still others were gateways with closed off entries to different parts of the old city. As I went back and looked through them, [only two of those doors were open](#). One was a [church](#) door. The other was the door of the "[Tomb of Jesus](#)" outside the city in the Garden Tomb.



The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery says about biblical doors that they are “**places of transition.**” We move through open doors to greet new people. We close doors to find quiet and solitude. They are **gates, portals,** entryways associated with entrance into areas of great **spiritual significance.** They are often used to depict **religious boundaries** of things that are open or closed, hidden or revealed, welcoming or

excluding. We find them in **Eden**, with sin lurking at the door; at the **Flood** with God closing the door of the ark to protect Noah; in the **Exodus** with blood needing to be placed over the door. **Eglon** is locked behind a door and dies. **Rahab** puts a scarlet thread on her door and lives. In **Psalm 24:7, 9** the “**ancient doors**” which are shut are commanded to be lifted up so that the King of glory may come in. And in **Revelation 4:1**, John sees “**a door standing open**” and he is commanded to come in.¹

These last two doors are of particular interest. The **second one opens our passage** today. John says it is a door “**in heaven.**” Many people think that the doors of Psalm 24 are also the heavenly pearly gates. But this is incorrect. The early church was of one accord in interpreting these as **the doors ... of hell.** “**Jesus smashed the eternal bolts, and the iron gates collapsed on Christ’s command.**”² “**He was crucified and he died, and he descended to Hell, and there he ruled all things. The gatekeepers of Hell, seeing him, were terrified. After three days he was resurrected ...**” (*Council of Sirmium, 359 AD*).³

¹ “Door,” in Leland Ryken et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 215-16.

² **Gospel of Nicodemus** (also called the Acts of Pilate).

³ For these and much more **see my sermon**, “Lift Up Your Heads, O Gates!” Who is This King of Glory?” (1-22-2017),

Confusing the doors of heaven and hell in Psalm 24 can simply be due to bad exegesis. But a deeper kind of confusion exist in fallen sinful man about *what and who are behind* these doors. This is exemplified by many who seek to **break on through to the other side**, but let's take someone like **Jim Morrison** and his band *The Doors* since he's the author of that phrase. An official website tells us,

At the center of The Door's mystique is the magnetic presence of singer-poet Jim Morrison, the leather-clad 'Lizard King' who brought the riveting power of a shaman to the microphone. Morrison was a film student at UCLA when he met keyboardist Ray Manzarek on Venice Beach in 1965. Upon hearing Morrison's poetry, Manzarek immediately suggested they form a band; the singer took the group's name from Aldous Huxley's infamous psychedelic memoir, "The Doors of Perception." Constantly challenging censorship and conventional wisdom, Morrison's lyrics delved into primal issues of sex, violence, freedom and the spirit. He outraged authority figures, braved intimidation and arrest, and followed the road of excess (as one of his muses, the poet William Blake, famously put it) toward the palace of wisdom.⁴

<https://www.rbenc.com/Psalm%2024%20Who%20is%20this%20King%20of%20Glory%20big%20font.pdf>

⁴ "The Doors," www.thedoors.com/the-band.

What was urging Morrison in his question for sex, violence, and rebellion? Hallucinogenic drugs, which became the rage of the 60s and 70s. These drugs became **doors to the invisible realm**. But people like Morrison didn't seem to care who they were talking too or what they were being shown.

Huxley himself was doing “scientific experiments” on a psychedelic called **mescaline** found in the **peyote** cactus. He once called his trips a “**sacramental vision**,” giving it religious overtones. He took the name of his book from a poem by that same 18th century poet, painter, and printmaker **William Blake**. His poem is called “**The Marriage of Heaven and Hell**,” and in it he writes, “**If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.**”

The Wikipedia calls **Blake**, “**A committed Christian.**” He was anything but. This mystic was heavily influenced by a cult contemporary to him founded by **Emmanuel Swedenborg** who himself had a “**spiritual awakening**” where he said he received a revelation that Jesus Christ had appointed him to write a book called *The Heavenly Doctrine* which would allow Christianity to be reformed in much needed ways. In it, he speaks about how he **freely visited heaven and hell** and conversed with angels, demons, and

other spirits and that the Last Judgment had occurred the year before its publication in 1758. In his infamous poem, he even has a conversation with Isaiah and Ezekiel where they are dining together and he asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them, and whether they did not think at the time that they would be misunderstood, and so be the cause of imposition. Isaiah answered: “I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception: but my senses discovered the infinite in everything; and as I was then persuaded, and remained confirmed, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote.”

Each of these men were, in their own way (yet through the help of one another), seeking a glimpse of the Divine, which they each seemed to have thought they were themselves a piece of. It's classic paganism, with antinomian tentacles of licentiousness, lawlessness, violence, and especially, anything even remotely smacking of Christian orthodoxy. That's their worship. That's their chief end. By the way, as most of you know, Morrison died at the age of 27 of a drug overdose. He broke on through the other side one too many times. Now, unfortunately, he knows what's behind the door.

Originally, I wasn't going to begin a sermon on Revelation 4 talking about doors. But then I realized this is **John's own transition**, and one he apparently wanted us to notice. It is important to remember something we saw a while back, but if we were reading the book chronologically, we would immediately notice. **There have been two doors in Revelation** already. One appears in the sixth church—**Philadelphia**. The other in the seventh—**Laodicea**, in other words the immediately preceding passages. Jesus told the **faithful church**, “**I know your works. Behold, I have set before you *an open door*, which no one is able to shut**” (**Rev 3:8**). He told the **lukewarm church**, “**Behold, I stand at *the door* and knock. If anyone hears my voice and *opens the door*, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me**” (**Rev 3:20**).

The closed door is to be **opened by those who hear Christ's voice**. In their case, it is an allusion to the **Song of Solomon 5:2**, “**The voice of my beloved, he knocks on the door. Open to me, my beloved.**” They are already in the chamber! They are **already married**. It is Christ and his church. Their opening the door is a sign of their repentance and sorrow. But there is also a hint of Jesus' story of the Narrow Door in Luke's Gospel. “**Strive to enter through the**

narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and *shut the door*, and you begin to stand outside and *to knock at the door*, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from’” (Lk 13:24-25).⁵ In one, we can hear the patience of the beloved who will not come into his wife until she is ready. In the other, we hear the warning of the Doorkeeper who will not let anyone in who does not know the Master of the House.

As for the open door, **who opened it?** It is Christ, who not coincidentally is called The Door in John’s Gospel (John 10:9). He tells them he is the one who “**opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens**” (Rev 3:7). You don’t want anyone else opening these supernatural doors.

Now we may ask a question, **what is behind these doors?** To the one, it must be opened to find out. To the other, they simply need walk through it to see. All the churches were given some kind of a glimpse of what’s behind this door, however. The Ephesians were told about **the tree of life** in the paradise of God (Rev 2:7). The Smyrnaeans we told they would **not be hurt** by the second

⁵ For discussions on both of these see G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 308.

death (11). To Pergamum he said he will give some of the hidden manna and a white stone with a new name (17). Thyatira would be given the morning star (28). Sardis will have white clothes and the one who holds the seven stars and has the seven spirits will confess their name before the Father (3:5). Philadelphia will become a pillar in the temple of God in the new Jerusalem (12). And Laodicea will have a seat on the throne with Christ (21).

What kind of language is this? It is sanctuary language: priestly clothes, holy food, churchly architecture, tabernacle lights, temple thrones. Christ is inviting this church to come into the very sanctuary of God. What we will find here is of a very different nature and order to anything people are finding in their own trips through meditation, starvation, or drugs. Because what is seen here is only knowable to one that God himself invites and welcomes. So many people want a glimpse of this, or so they say. But do they really? Let's begin our journey through John's door.

Revelation 4-5: Context and Structure

As we enter Revelation 4-5, it is common to identify this as the introduction to the second of its seven sections—the opening of the seven seals.

1. *Cycle 1*: Christ and his Seven Churches (Ch 1-3)
2. **Cycle 2: The Vision of the Seven Seals (Ch 4-7)**
3. *Cycle 3*: The Vision of the Seven Trumpets (Ch 8-11)
4. *Cycle 4*: The Persecuting Dragon and the Church (Ch 12-14)
5. *Cycle 5*: The Vision of the Seven Bowls (Ch 15-16)
6. *Cycle 6*: Fall of Babylon/ Churches Vindication (Ch 17-19)
7. *Cycle 7*: The Great Consummation (Ch 20-22)

The seven seals are first brought up in **Rev 5:1** which poses a **dilemma**. The seals are sealed. And no one is found worthy to open them. Is anyone worthy? That chapter then tells us the answer which then allows the main material in the book to unfold.

However, it would be a **grave mistake** to disconnect what we are about to see here to what we have just read with the churches.⁶ As someone writes, **“Rev 4-5 is more than an introduction to the seals. It is that, but it is also the goal or**

⁶ **Going Deeper.** I grew up in a form of Dispensationalism that did this in an extreme way. Reading the book strictly chronologically, they saw the seven churches dealing with the “Great Parenthesis” (the church age) and the Rapture of the church taking place in Rev 4:1 with the language “come up here.” Larkin is a good example. He divides the book into “the things which you have seen” (ch. 1), “the things which are” (chs. 2-3), and “the things which shall be hereafter” (chs. 4-22). He says, **“The words ‘after these things’ refer to the things that shall immediately follow the completion of the ‘Church Age,’ as prefigured in the Messages to the Seven Churches. The Church disappears from view with the close of the third chapter and is not heard of again until the nineteenth chapter, where her marriage to the Lamb is announced. Rev. 19:7–9. The removal of the Church at the end of the third chapter opens the way for God to renew His dealings with Israel, and take up the broken thread of Jewish History”** [bold original]. **Clarence Larkin**, *The Book of Revelation: A Study of the Last Prophetic Book of Holy Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Rev. Clarence Larkin Estate, 1919), 32. By the way, I consider this little book to have been a catalyst in my own spiritual development, unlike anything before it. I had a one-on-one Bible study with a mentor, and we devoured Scripture because of it. Though I now think Larkin is quite wrong about much of his reading of this book, I’m thankful for his work and how God used it in my life.

climax to the series of churches.”⁷ Amen. Jesus has been holding out glimpses to the churches of what he now exposes in the full light of the glory of God to our spiritual vision. This vision alone can counter those temptations men have that come from other doors which are supposed to remain locked. We aren't playing *Let's Make a Deal* here. There's **only one door here that satisfies and fulfills**. All others lead to death. And you don't have to guess which door this is or play a game of luck to find out. But you do have to prepare yourself for holy war, then fight in it, and conquer through faith in order to walk through the door. This is both a final goal of the Christian life and an already present reality in the already/not yet.

Structurally, these two chapters seem to form a **single simple unit**, though each section contains its own internal structure with a center, as we will see as we make our way through these chapters.

- A. The worship around the throne of heaven (4:1-11)
 - B. The seven sealed book – the Lamb can open it (5:1-5)
 - B¹. The Lamb receives the book (5:6-10)
- A¹. The worship around the throne of heaven (5:11-14)

⁷ Frank W. Hardy, *Revelation 4-5 and 19a* (1995, 2005), 33. http://www.historicism.org/Documents/Rev4-5_Book.pdf. Note: Hardy is a Seventh Day Adventist. While there is a lot to be desired at the end of his study here (with Ellen White), like many Adventists, he does a good job reading the basic structure and grammar of the Apocalypse (we also saw a lot of this with other Adventists in our previous study of Daniel). Still, their eschatology should be read with caution.

This is important because there is **an essential sense in which they need to be read together**. The worship scene of chapter 4 has a climax in chapter 5. It isn't just there to be there.

The **unity of thought** that they exhibit is seen more easily when we consider that there are **fourteen points of correspondence** between these two chapters and Daniel 7—a throne room scene of the Ancient of Days, his divine council, and one like a Son of Man:

1. introductory vision phraseology (Dan. 7:9 [cf. 7:2, 6–7]; Rev. 4:1)
2. a throne(s) set in heaven (Dan. 7:9a; Rev. 4:2a [cf. 4:4a])
3. God sitting on a throne (Dan. 7:9b; Rev. 4:2b)
4. God's appearance on the throne (Dan. 7:9c; Rev. 4:3a)
5. fire before the throne (Dan. 7:9d–10a; Rev. 4:5)
6. heavenly servants surrounding the throne (Dan. 7:10b; Rev. 4:4b, 6b–10; 5:8, 11, 14)
7. book(s) before the throne (Dan. 7:10c; Rev. 5:1–5)
8. the book(s) opened (Dan. 7:10c; Rev. 5:2–5, 9)
9. a divine (messianic) figure approaching God's throne to receive authority to reign forever over a kingdom (Dan. 7:13–14a; Rev. 5:5b–7, 9a, 12–13)
10. the kingdom's scope: "all peoples, nations, and tongues" (Dan. 7:14a; Rev. 5:9b)
11. the seer's emotional distress on account of the vision (Dan. 7:15; Rev. 5:4)
12. the seer's reception of heavenly counsel concerning the vision from one of the heavenly throne servants (Dan. 7:16; Rev. 5:5a)
13. The saints given divine authority to reign over a kingdom (Dan. 7:18, 22, 27a; Rev. 5:10)
14. concluding mention of God's eternal reign (Dan. 7:27b; Rev. 5:13–14).⁸

⁸ Beale, 314–315.

At the same time, **chapter 4** is itself its own contained unit of thought with an introductory verse (**Rev 4:1**) followed by a chiasm with its center in **vs. 8**:

- A) The glory of the Lord + of His throne (Rev 4:2-3)
- B) The thrones of the 24 elders / the glory of the throne room (Rev 4:4-6a)
- C) The 4 living creatures in the midst of the throne (Rev 4:6b-8a)⁹
 - D) *And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!”*** (Rev 4:8b)
- C¹) When the living creatures give glory to Him who sits on the throne (Rev 4:9)
- B¹) The 24 elders worship Him + cast their crowns before the throne (Rev 4:10)
- A¹) Extolling the glory of the Lord + His majesty (Rev 4:11)

The center is a song. There are **five of them** in these two chapters. It is the song of the profound worship of **the thrice holy God**, the same song Isaiah really did hear when he actually did see the Lord sitting on his throne and highly exalted (**Isa 6:1-3**). There is simply too much here I want to talk about today to get through all of this chapter, let alone through chapter 5 in order to even approach the kind of justice to them that they deserve. So today we will be going through **Rev 4:1-7**. These verses **describe what's behind the door**. The rest of the chapter will tell us **what takes place in**

⁹ Part C has its own structure which becomes important in highlighting the nature of the four living creatures. We will see this later.

it which will then lead to why we are being allowed this glimpse of heavenly worship in ch. 5.

Revelation 4:1-7: What's Behind the Door?

John's Commissioning: Invitation to Walk through the Door (Rev 4:1)

Moving into the passage, we have an introductory verse. “After this I looked” (Rev 4:1). After what? After hearing Jesus address the seven churches of Asia Minor. “And behold, a door was standing open in heaven!” I believe this is the very same door that was open to the church as Philadelphia. For this is a door that only Christ can open and only Christ can shut.

“And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet said...” Scholars disagree on whether this is the voice of Christ or the voice of an angel introducing Christ. We find the same kind of difficulty in books like Daniel and Zechariah, where it isn't always clear who is speaking. What does matter is that John is being invited into heaven. “Come up here.” John is not boldly going into heaven of his own accord. He is being welcomed into heaven by God himself, whether that be through an angel

or the Lord, it is irrelevant since the angel would speak for Christ. More than this, he is going to be shown “what must take place after this” (see n. 6).

Something truly important is going on here that is often missed. Dennis Johnson points out, “The opened door and heavenly call initiate John’s summons as prophet to enter the council chamber of the King of kings, to hear his plans and purposes and then to bring his message to the people.”¹⁰ He shows how “the prophetic commissioning of Isaiah (Isa 5) and Ezekiel (Ezek 1) entailed their visionary entrance into the Lord’s heavenly holy place, the prototype of the earthly temple, to see his glory and receive his word.” This, in fact, is what distinguishes a prophet from a non-prophet.

God asks Jeremiah, “For who among them has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his word and listened” (Jer 23:18). The “council” here is the divine council, with God himself as the head. In Job it says, “Are you the first man [Adam] who was born? Or were you brought forth before the hills? Have you listened in the council of God [implied: like he did]” (Job 15:7-8)” “Indeed,” says Amos, “my Lord God does nothing unless he revealed his council to his servants the prophets”

¹⁰ Dennis E. Johnson, *Triumph of the Lamb: A Commentary on Revelation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2001), 97.

(**Amos 3:7**).¹¹ John's commissioning is his being invited into the very divine council of heaven to see the plans God has and is about to reveal to his churches. He is going to let us see what he saw.

The Heavenly Throne: Rev 4:2-3

“**At once I was in the Spirit...**” (**Rev 4:2**). John is having a waking vision. He is being **transported spiritually** into the unseen realm. So what does he see? Chubby little cherubs singing in choir lofts? Cupidesque angels shooting arrows off pillowy clouds? Bright lights of tranquility where everything oozes into infinity?

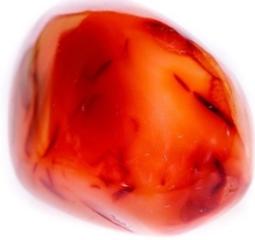
He sees **a throne room**. “**And behold, a throne stood in heaven.**” The word “throne” is the dominant word of the chapter, appearing 14 times. Eleven of these are singular: **throne**. It describes the throne of God. We see this in **vv. 2-3**. “**With one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance off an emerald.**” First, let's think about **its appearance**. Jasper, carnelian, and emerald are

¹¹ See **David E. Bokovoy**, “**בקעי תיבב ודיעהו ועמש**: Invoking the Council as Witnesses in Amos 3:13,” *JBL* 127:1 (Spring 2008): 37-51.

precious and semiprecious stones of dazzling solid and translucent **reds and greens**. The translucence, especially of the emerald rainbow, gives them an ethereal quality, as if they are not from this world. It reminds me very much of the colors of the **aurora borealis** (northern lights), which can even be seen from space, appropriately enough.



Polished Jasper



Polished Carnelian



Emerald (unpolished, polished)



Northern Lights (Various Artists)

What's the symbolism here? There's plenty. The colors and the gems depict God's otherworldly splendor. "It displays his wealth, his beauty, and his glory."¹² In fact, jasper is listed first because at the end of Revelation, it is said to depict the very Glory of God (Rev 21:11). In a word, he is greater than any earthly king. In a world dominated by tyrannical Roman Caesars, this would have an immediately comforting impact. No earthly king compares to the King of kings. Therefore, what can they do to us?

Second, we have the rainbow. Curiously, the book of Sirach, written prior to the NT, depicts the famous high priest of Israel in the third century BC, a man named Simon II (219-199 BC), a man who dedicated his life to preserving and taking care of the temple in ways few had done as shining almost like Moses, with the glory of God. "He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full: As the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds" (Sirach 50:6-7). These priestly images are things we associate with the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ, even in Revelation.

¹² Vern Poythress, *Returning King: A Guide to the Book of Revelation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000), 100.

But the rainbow more obviously reminds us of **the Flood**. The Flood itself teaches us about **God's judgment** against sin. Given all the warnings to these churches that have just been mentioned, this thought will come to the subconscious mind at the very least, especially when it is reinforced by all the times "throne" appears. Thrones are not only places of rule, but of judgment. However, the rainbow implies that God's judgment is going to be **tempered with mercy**.¹³ Furthermore, all of this shows us that even though God's realm is separated from the earthly, God is nevertheless in control of earth's affairs. That's the point. Beale says, "**Regardless of how rampant evil seems to run and to cause God's people to suffer, they can know that his hand superintends everything for their good and his glory.**"¹⁴ This is one of the reasons why it is so important not to throw everything in this book into the future. It has very practical implications right now.

Perhaps the most immanent relates directly to this point. These **precious stones** are going to occur again in the **new creation on earth**. However, the fact that they are already here in chapter 4 portrays to us that the beginning of the new creation in heaven is even now working its way down

¹³ Beale, 321.

¹⁴ Ibid., 320.

to earth.¹⁵ Otherwise, what's the point of showing this God and how he is going to interact in the affairs of mankind? Surely, this is a glorious thing we are preparing to behold, a thing only those

Finally, who is this “one seated on the throne?” It is tempting to say that it is Christ, and many have thought this. We know that Isaiah saw Christ sitting on the throne in the heavenly temple, for John tells us as much (John 12:41; cf. Isa 6:1 and the targum of the same verse). Furthermore, the description John gives has much in common with Ezekiel 1 who sees “an expanse” and “the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire” (Ezek 1:25). The one he saw on the throne was of “a likeness with a human appearance” (26). This person is depicted with nearly the same imagery we see of Jesus in Revelation 1—gleaming metal, fire, and brightness (27). And, “like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around” (28). So we have even the rainbow.

Let me pause here to suggest that this glorious rainbow shining forth all around this enthroned King is an image of the Holy Spirit—the Glory of God.¹⁶ We will see something

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ A few have made this connection. One interesting one is from the poet Christina Rossetti, author of the Christmas song, “In the Bleak Midwinter.” Spoken as only a poet can, “For a rainbow being indissolubly connected with a cloud, seems at once to suggest an emblematic

similar again in **Revelation 10:1** when John says, “I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire.” Without a doubt, John sees the Lord Jesus in his glory here and his being accompanied by the bow is like him being accompanied by the dove or the clouds or the fire, all of which are images of the Holy Spirit.

At any rate, while it is **tempting to see John beholding Christ** on the throne here in Revelation 4, I do not think this is who he is seeing for two reasons. The **first** is that as much as this whole scene has in common with Ezekiel 1, it has even more in common with Daniel 7, as we will soon see. But in Daniel 7, the prophet sees “**The Ancient of Days**” (**Dan 7:9**) on the throne, and only later does he see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven (**13**). In other words, Daniel saw the Father, not in his full glory, but in some hidden, cloaked way.¹⁷ Second, when we come to chapter 5, we will see the Son of God, but in the form of a Lamb. While it is a

allusion to the Most Holy Spirit of God. Its form shows that it proceeds from a center. It exhibits to us what light is, by evolving the lovely tints hidden in its whiteness. It enables us to look on the light which viewed directly would blind us. It conveyed hope to Noah and his family all alone in a ruined world. It gladdens whoso beholds it: the eye that seeth it beareth witness to it. What we look on is water, but transfigured by fire: fire and water, two chief symbols of God the Holy Ghost.” **Christina Rossetti**, *The Face of the Deep* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1892), 152.

¹⁷ For how the Father can be seen, see **Matt Foreman** and Douglas Van Dorn, *The Angel of the LORD: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Study* (Dacono, Co: Waters of Creation Pub., 2020), 346.

vision, and visions can be rather bizarre, it seems pretty incoherent to say that John sees the Son of God on the throne as a man and then the Son of God approaching the throne as a Lamb in the same vision.

The Heavenly Attendants: Rev 4:4-8

It is vital to see that the **throne of God here is the centerpiece** of the entire vision. Everything else that we will now look at radiates out from its center brilliance like beams of light emitting focused rays from the sun on a partly cloudy day. In other words, anything else that is here will only find its significance and placement and value and worth in terms of its position around the central throne.¹⁸ **God is the focus, not the creation.** It merely serves him.

That said, there is in fact much more there. **Vs. 4** introduces us to the **plural usage: thrones**. There is more than one throne here. This is very much like what Daniel sees. **“As I looked, thrones were placed ... the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened” (Dan 7:9-10)**. This passage is the biblical origin of Paul’s declaration about the Son of God, **“For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers**

¹⁸ Beale, 320.

or authorities-- all things were created through him and for him” (Col 1:16). In Colossians, thrones, rulers, and authorities can all have human or supernatural representatives. Dominions is clearly a term used of heavenly beings, and indeed, all four of these terms certainly have at least those in mind here. Jesus created them. In Daniel, most commentators refer to them as “angels,” but that word is never used. 100 years ago, R. H. Charles suggested the phrase “the heavenly powers, the assessors of the Judge.”¹⁹ In his dissertation, Ronn Johnson calls them “personal spirits” who have “authoritative rule.”²⁰ In other words, they are the members of the heavenly divine council.

These thrones are immediately identified as being sat upon by “twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.” The golden crowns remind us of the halo in renaissance art. It is obviously a sign of royalty and royalty is family. White garments are a sign of purity which allows them to serve in the heavenly court-temple. But who are these twenty-four elders? This is a question that has perplexed commentators since the beginning.

¹⁹ R. H. Charles, *The Book of Daniel: Introduction, Revised Version with Notes, Index and map*, New Century Bible, ed. Walter F. Adeney (New York: Neny Frowde, n.d.), 75.

²⁰ Ronn Johnson, “The Old Testament Background for Paul’s Principalities and Powers” (PhD Dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2004), 117.

One option is that they are **human saints who have died**, with the most likely candidates being the twelve sons of Judah and the twelve disciples. Granted, it is a vision of the future, but it seems to me that the fact that John is still alive still poses a problem. Is he seeing himself?

Here's what we have to understand about what's going on here. We are still at the beginning of the book, **a book which mirrors itself** at the end. The number 24 becomes significant here. When we come to the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, it will tell us that it has a great wall with "twelve gates" and "**on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel**" (**Rev 21:12**). But this wall also has "**twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb**" (**14**). Twelve tribes plus twelve apostles equal twenty-four names. This "twenty-four" mirrors the twenty-four sitting here on the throne. But they are not identical. The end has transformed the beginning, expanded it.

God's original plan in the divine council. There were heavenly beings who would rule the heavens and God created man to rule the earth. One group of sons, his royal family in heaven; the other group of sons, his royal family on earth. The two were to be in a harmonious relationship.

This is why the heavenly beings and human beings are interacting on Mt. Eden—the original place of the divine council on earth.

But of course, sin entered the picture and blew that plan all to bits. **Or did it?** No. It didn't. For the plan all along was **to glorify the Son of God** as both heavenly and human being: The Angel of the LORD, Jesus Christ in human flesh. Through him, heaven and earth would mirror one another perfectly. And, through him, God would reestablish his earthly sons rule of the earth on into eternity for those who are found in Christ.

These twenty-four elders in heaven mirror this new Jerusalem twenty-four on earth, because as in heaven, so on earth. Therefore, my opinion is that **these twenty-four elders are heavenly beings**, perhaps the most exalted of the sons of God—God royal heavenly family that remain loyal to him. This seems to be what Isaiah has in mind when he says, **“On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and**

in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders” (Isa 24:21-23).²¹

But why twenty-four? I’m not asking this question to go off on a bunny trail. I think the answer is intimately related to understanding this throne-room scene. I believe the number **relates to time** which itself is only measurable on earth because of the stars (and the sun, which of course is a star). What measurement of time do we break into twenty-four periods of time? **A day**. Twenty-four hours are in a day. How does this relate to the twenty-four elders?

Humans coming to measure a day with this length was no accident, but it did take some time to develop. It began, apparently, with the Babylonians figuring out how to

²¹ **Going Deeper.** Beale notices that the Rabbis thought these elders were Jewish elders. This is based in part on the twenty-four orders of priests (1Chr 24:3-19) and the twenty-four Levitical gatekeepers (26:17-19), and the twenty-four orders of Levites commissioned to “prophesy in giving thanks and praising the Lord” with harps, lyres, and cymbals (25:6-31) (see Beale, 324). Beale himself seems to opt for a Jewish tradition that they represent the “twenty-four prophets” who spoke in Israel about the LORD or the twenty-four authors of the OT Scriptures. However, if the mirror of heaven on earth is understood, then this is simply a parallel Yahweh commanded to reflect the heavenly temple and what goes on there. See Timothy M. Willis, “Yahweh’s Elders (Isa 24,23): Senior Officials of the Divine Court,” *ZFW* 103.3 (1991): 375–85, <file:///Users/douglasvandorn/Downloads/zatw.1991.103.3.375.pdf>; Donald A. MacKenzie, *Myths of Babylonia and Assyria* (London: The Gresham Publishing Company, 1915), 307-09. <https://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/mba/mba19.htm> (and his little unrelated tidbit, “Was Gutium associated with demons, as in Scandinavia the north-east was associated with the giants whom Thor waged war?” See also the discussion in Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 356. Willis notices of these creatures, “They do not simply sit with Yahweh; they oversee the operation of the universe with him” (385). Whether they are the most elderly statemen of the heavenly sons of God or they are separate senior officials (or both), it is difficult to know in Isaiah. But if John is getting this from Isaiah, they would seem to be sons, for they have royal crowns.

measure the course of a year according to 36 constellations.²² These had a parallel in the 36 “decans” (“those connected with work,” which are also stars and small constellations) of Egypt, which made its way from India to Greece, which assimilated the ideas upon their conquest of the world.²³ **Diodorus of Sicily** tells us that over time, these 36 were divided into twelve main signs of the zodiac which left twenty-four more, divided into twelve signs *north* of the zodiac and twelve signs *south* of them which were spread out so exactly that every ten days a new sign would rise above the earth, making for a total of 360 days, to which they eventually added five more.²⁴ Voilà, you have a calendar because of the stars. These twenty-

²² A very helpful article on this is **B. L. van der Waerden**, “Babylonian Astronomy. II. The Thirty-Six Stars,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8:1 (Jan 1949): 6-26. https://www.jstor.org/stable/542436?read-now=1&refreqid=excelsior%3A6288d31b275a0d207e86c181591c2352&seq=18#page_scan_tab_contents.

²³ We find a Christianized or Judaized version of them in the pseudepigraphal **Testament of Solomon** chapter 18 where the decans become demons! Clearly, the author did not appreciate the sciences of the pagans which perverted God’s good order and turned it into a worship of the gods. In the chapter, rather than the “counseling gods” “judging the universe” and overseeing things on earth in a harmonious order, the **demons** work all kinds of mischief to mankind.

²⁴ “Under the course in which these planets move are situated, according to them, thirty [six] stars, which they designate as ‘counseling gods;’ of these one half oversee the regions above the earth and the other half those beneath the earth, having under their purview the affairs of mankind and likewise those of the heavens; and every ten days one of the stars above is sent as a messenger, so to speak, to the stars below, and again in like manner of the stars below the earth to those above, and this movement of their is fixed and determined by means of an orbit which is unchanging forever. *Twelve of these gods, they say, hold chief authority*, and to each of these the Chaldeans assign a month and one of *the signs of the zodiac*, as they are called. And through the midst of these signs, they say, both the sun and moon and the five planets make their course ... *Beyond the circle of the zodiac they designate twenty-for other stars*, of which one half, they say, are situated in the northern parts and one half in the southern, and of these those which are visible they assign to the world of the living, while those which are invisible they regard as being adjacent to the dead, and so they call them ‘Judges of the Universe.’” (**Diodorus of Sicily**, *Bibliotheca Historica* II.28:30-31).

four²⁵ then began to be separated into twelve periods of day and night, thus eventually forming what we know of as a twenty-four hour day.²⁶

Many scholars have identified these **twenty-four elders with these heavenly beings** associated with these stars, though many others have disagreed. The main reason I lean towards this idea actually has to do with *the other entities* that surround the throne: **The Four Living Creatures**. There is actually a small structure that takes us right to them. It is found in **vv. 6-8**:

- A) In the midst of the throne | around the throne were **4 living creatures** (Rev 4:6b)
 - B) **Full of eyes** before | behind (Rev 4:6c)
 - C) **1st like a lion + 2nd like a calf + 3rd had a face like a man + 4th like a flying eagle (Rev 4:7)**
- A¹) The **4 living creatures**, each one having 6 wings (Rev 4:8a)
- B¹) **Full of eyes** around and within (Rev 4:8b)

Notice how **vv. 6** and **8** both refer to the **four living creatures**. The first says they are **on each side** of the throne. This would be north, south, east, and west. The second says that they have **six wings**, like the seraphim (shining ones) that Isaiah see around the throne (**Isa 6:2**). Isaiah says two

²⁵ Twenty-four also has a counterpart in the number of Yazatas (angels) in Zoroastrianism according to Plutarch.

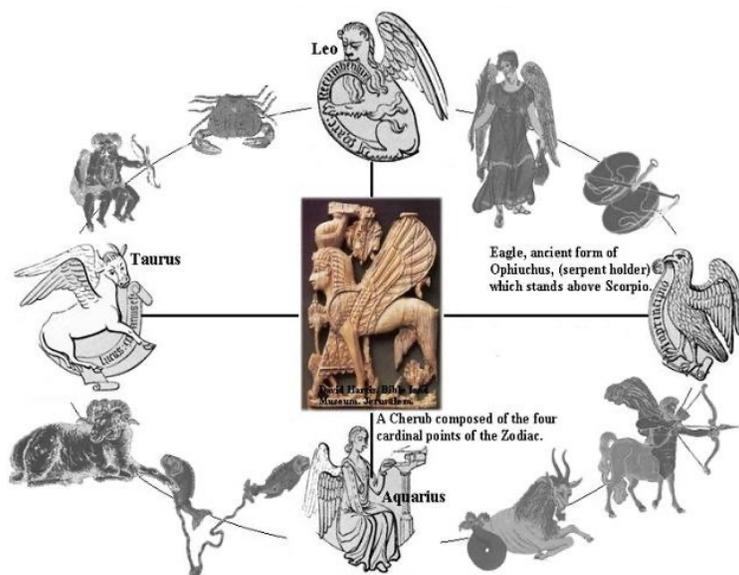
²⁶ An interesting study of how this happened is **Otto Neugebauer**, *The Exact Sciences of Antiquity*, second edition (New York: Dover Publications, 1969), 81-88.

covered their faces, two covered their feet, and they used two to fly. These are heavenly creatures—flying. But even these most holy of created beings must cover themselves in God’s presence. Immediately after each statement you have the description of **eyes**. The first has “**eyes in front and behind.**” The second has “**eyes all around and within.**” The center of the structure is what they look like. Each one has a different face. One is like **lion**. One is like an **ox**. One has the face of a **man**. The fourth like an **eagle** in flight (**Rev 4:7**).

This time, the depiction comes from Ezekiel 1 again, except with a slight difference. The faces are all the same. They both have wings, though Ezekiel’s only have four. And Ezekiel’s creatures each had these four faces. Truly **bizarre!** What’s going on here? Well, these faces or appearances are really important to understand.

Let’s return to our discussion of the stars, particularly, **the zodiac**. There are twelve signs of the zodiac (the center twelve of the thirty-six; $12+24=36$). The twelve have **four that are prominent**. They point to the **four cardinal points** (i.e. the four corners of the earth): North, South, East, and West. They are Leo the **lion**. Opposite him is Aquarius the **man holding water**. To the left is Taurus the **bull**. To the right is Scorpio, usually thought of as a scorpion, but in biblical days

it was as an *eagle*.²⁷ Lion. Bull. Man. Eagle. That's precisely what John seeing in precisely the four corners of the heavenly throne room. And **these four represent the twelve** (and thus our 36). In other words, **God's throne is the center of the entire universe**. All the heavenly beings surround him. And since these are the beings that govern time, it says that whatever authority they have comes from him. They worship him. He is Lord of time and all things related to it.



²⁷ [Beasley-Murray and Beale](#) both wrongly assert that the eagle was never part of the zodiacal scheme (i.e. the 12 signs). But this is incorrect. First of all, Scorpio is by the far the most confusing of the twelve, having a relationship to a scorpion, a serpent, and an eagle and sometimes a phoenix. The serpent is easily explained by the constellation immediately above Scorpio, Ophiuchus (lit: “Serpent-Bearer”)—a man holding a snake (Hence, the Tribe of Dan is a serpent in Gen 49:17, also related to Bashan). Many have seen Aquila the Eagle as the explanation for the eagle. Though this is difficult because Aquila is so far away, it nevertheless has been associated with Scorpio, though not identified as Scorpio for thousands of years. Perhaps our best hint is the star Antares, the brightest star in Scorpio. It was known along the Euphrates as “the Day-Heaven-Bird,” a main reason some have said that Abraham (from Babylon remember) knew Scorpio as an eagle. See. [William Tyler Olcott](#), *Star Lore of All Ages: A Collection of Myths, Legends, and Facts Concerning the Constellations of the Northern Hemisphere* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1911), 327-29. A dictionary entry for DAR-LUGAL, Antares as “The Day-heaven-bird”: *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology: January to December, 1896*, vol. XVIII (London: Offices of the Society, 1895), 37.

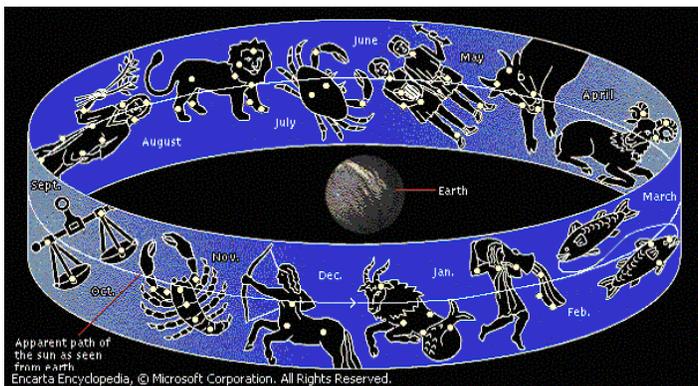
This is, I believe, further confirmed by the **eyes all around**. This bizarre picture of something almost like omniscience, **all-seeing**, that is presented with these multitude of eyes can also be viewed from a night-time perspective in the stars of the sky. Ezekiel again speaks not only of the four living creatures, but of majestic **wheels**. “As I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them. As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl. And the four had the same likeness, their appearance and construction being as it were a wheel within a wheel” (**Ezek 1:15-16**). Like the living creatures, Ezekiel says, these wheels had “**eyes all around**” (**18**). What does this have to do with the night sky?

While not a few people today think Ezekiel saw a **UFO** (see Ancient Aliens on the History Channel if you don't believe me), what he was really viewing was a kind of astronomical fast-speed motion in visionary form. If you fix camera on the north star and let it time-lapse, you will see something most interesting. You get what Journey famously sang about: The Wheel in the Sky keeps on turning...

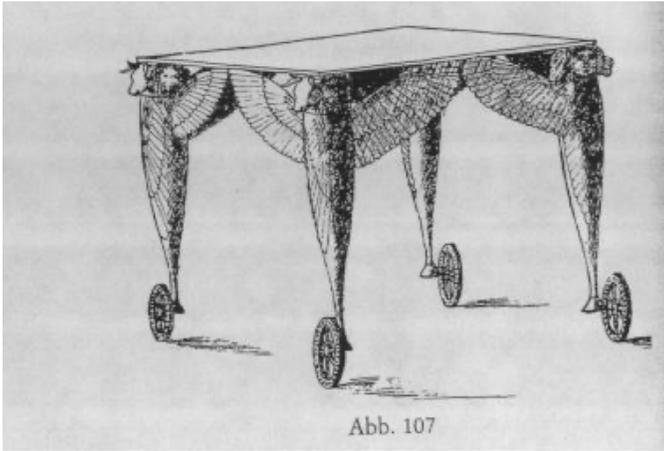


(Left) Ezekiel 1 Depicted in The Winchester Bible. (Right) The Wheel in the Sky

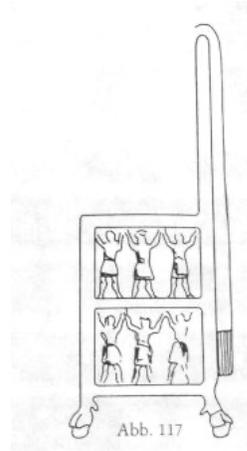
These things were all depicted in the ancient near east on **the king's throne**. The living creatures are guardians or cherubim who protect the throne and were often depicted with these same four heads. The wheels allow him to be transported, as if he were God on earth (a blasphemous practice of usurping the very scene John is showing us behind the door). In fact, Daniel says as much in **Daniel 7:9**, but of the real throne of God. **“His throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.”**



The Heavenly “Wheel”



- (1) a throne platform with wheels;
- (2) multi-faced bovine heads with touching wings – 2 more wings are folded on the body of the creature;
- (3) hoofed leg-bottoms adjacent to the wheels



Creatures holding up the god-king, lifting him off the earth. Note the hoofed feet at the base of the throne



Four wingtips of the creatures touching each other as they support the god and his throne (see Ezek. 1:22ff.)²⁸

Therefore, these eyes, which symbolize them watching everything, also symbolize the host of heaven, all the stars, which combined make for **a lot of watchers**.²⁹

There's one more thing we need to talk about in this scene. It is **the inanimate objects** that are present. **"From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire..."** (Rev 4:5). This portion verse adds to **the holiness** and, quite frankly, the terror of what John must be seeing.

²⁸ Pictures from **Othmar Keel** – *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst: Eine neue Deutung der Majestatsschilderungen in Jes, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4* ("Visions of Yahweh and Seal Art: A New Interpretation of the Majestic Portrayals in Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1 and 10, and Zechariah 4"), Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, Stuttgart, 1984-85).

²⁹ For more on this see my sermon "Genesis 49: A Boot to the Head," (May 24, 2015), <https://www.rbcnc.com/Genesis%2049.1-28%20A%20Boot%20to%20the%20Head.pdf>.

We've seen it many times before in the Bible. When God descends on Mt. Sinai, the same things happen. **Lighting and rumblings and thunder** can be extremely beautiful, when viewed from a distance. But up close, they are terrifying. One person in our church knows this firsthand, as he was hit by a lightning bolt twice in one day. Nothing about his life has been the same since that moment. Massive electricity supercharges into the tiniest of funnels to strike with the kind of force that apparently could get Marty McFly Back to the Future!

It then calls these seven torches, “**the seven spirits of God.**” We've seen a glimpse of this in Revelation 1 when John wrote to the seven churches, “**Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne**” (**Rev 1:4**). This time, we are not talking about created beings, but again, **the Third Person of the Holy Trinity**. For he is often depicted surrounding the Son of God with **fire or cloud**. This is God's seven-fold Spirit, the one who is everywhere present in this universe, the one who **truly does see all things**. Here, he is illuminating the room like the **candlestick** lit the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. In fact, the candlestick is the earthly

representation of this very thing, and we have Jesus walking in their midst also back in **Revelation 1:12-13**.

This candlestick idea helps us understand the last image: **the sea of glass**. “**Before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal**” (**Rev 4:6**). Along with the fire, this has a mini-parallel in Daniel 7’s “**stream of fire**” that came out from before the throne of the Ancient of Days (**Dan 7:10**). But in Revelation, they are separate. The “**sea**” is what Solomon called the **great temple’s parallel to the washing basin** of the tabernacle (**1Kg 7:23**). And so we are meant to understand that not only is this a throne room where judgment occurs, it is also the heavenly temple, to which there is a counterpart on earth. Temples are where you worship. This is part of the reason for the worship we will look at next time.

For now, I want to return to the opening thought of going through the door. There’s a song by a relatively unknown 80s band that had a couple of small hits. **Zebra** is their name, and their biggest hit was called, “**Who’s Behind the Door?**” The acoustic twelve string guitar part is amazing, but even more so are the words. I only heard this song for the first time in the last few years and I was struck, having come to a more supernatural understanding of the

Bible, just how much some of these guys get it, and yet how completely far away they are at the same time. Much of the song hits on themes we've seen today, but from the point of view of someone like Jim Morrison rather than John the Apostle.

*We sailed away
We walked 2 thousand miles
And then we slipped away
We looked so hard
But couldn't seem to find just what
The world was for
Now we know
Just what the journey's for*

I'm guessing that the sailing away (think Styx too) probably had to do with drugs as they experimented with trying to figure out the meaning of life by trying to open the doors to the other world. They found their way in ... somewhere.

*Looking out to the stars
Think about what you are
What do they think of you
Animals in their zoo
They haven't got the time
Landing's not on their minds*

*How do they have the nerve
We're animals in preserve*

He personifies the stars like the ancients did. He realizes that compared to them, we are pathetic creatures. He conceives of us as being in their zoo. We are on display for the heavens. Earth is our cage.

*They watch us all
They're only making sure that we
Don't trip and fall
Now they look so hard
But they can't tell us why they're
Here and just what for
Because they don't know
Who opened up the door*

He literally calls them **watchers**! Their job, he figures, is to make sure we don't slip and fall. But at the end of the day, he's only guessing, because they can't talk to him because they don't know that he's watching them, because he opened up the door!

This is the rub of it. This is how men think. This is what they do. They barge into places they don't belong and have no business going all to figure out what that point of all this is. Martin Luther put this another way, as **climbing ladders**.

He identified three of them: **mysticism** (which we have here), **merit**, and **speculation** (meditation?). Men climb up into heaven through their works, through their own ideas of what they think it is like, and through their own mystical encounters with “the divine.” None of those work. None of those are acceptable.

What we need to tell them, and what you need to learn for yourself, is that God *has* got the time and landing *was* on his mind—the whole time. God doesn’t want us reaching up to heaven to bring Christ down, because **Christ came down to bring us to heaven**. He didn’t leave us here to figure it out all by ourselves. He condescended to us at the very beginning and all the way through history itself through the person of Christ and through his word to tell us what the point is and how to orient ourselves rightly in this world.

Without this understanding, nothing makes sense. Beale importantly says, “**All heavenly beings find significance only in their various placements around the central throne. And all earth’s inhabitants are appraised on the basis of their attitude to God’s claim to rule over them from this heavenly throne.**”³⁰ And their attitude can be summed up in one phrase. What do they think about **Jesus**, and the **Father** he

³⁰ Beale, 320.

came to represent, and his **Spirit** he sends to convict us and teach us the truth about these matters? Will they trust him by faith or will they turn their back on him? The creatures in Revelation 4 know what to do! And so must you.

There's one parallel today from John's Gospel I want to bring out. We've seen these **seven lamps** of fire burning before the throne and then four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. Later in the chapter, it tells us that the twenty-four elders "**fall before him**" (**Rev 4:10**). The **parallel** is found on the **night Jesus was betrayed**. John tells that Judas came that night with a band of soldiers "**with lanterns and torches**" (**John 18:3**). But Jesus, the one who knows all things, said, "**Whom do you seek?**" (4). They answered, "**Jesus of Nazareth.**" And Jesus said, "**I am he**" (5). Then it says, "**When Jesus said to them, 'I am he,' they drew back and fell to the ground**" (6). The soldiers who arrested Jesus did as the elders in heaven.

Why should they do this? Consider those doors of heaven and hell one last time. In some of the oldest Christian poetry we have, in the so-called Odes of Solomon, we read,

Ode 42

*¹¹ Sheol [Hades] saw me and was shattered,
and Death ejected me and many with me.*

¹² *I have been vinegar and bitterness to it,
and I went down with it as far as its depth.*

¹³ *Then the feet and the head it released,
because it was not able to endure my face.*

¹⁴ *And I made a congregation of living among his dead;
and I spoke with them by living lips;
in order that my word may not fail.*

¹⁵ *And those who had died ran toward me;
and they cried out and said, "Son of God, have pity on us.*

¹⁶ *"And deal with us according to your kindness,
and bring us out from the chains of darkness.*

¹⁷ *"And open for us the door
by which we may go forth to you,
for we perceive that our death does not approach you.*

Ode 17

¹ *Then I was crowned by my God,
and my crown is living.*

² *And I was justified by my Lord,
for my salvation is incorruptible.*

³ *I have been released from vanities,
and am not condemned.*

⁴ *My chains were cut off by his hands;
I received the face and form of a new person,
and I walked in him and was saved.*

⁵ *And the thought of truth led me,
and I went after it and did not err.*

Christ Speaks

⁶ *And all who saw me were amazed,
and I seemed to them like a stranger.*

⁷ *And he who knew and exalted me
is the Most High in all his perfection.*

⁸ *And he glorified me by his kindness,
and raised my understanding to the height of truth.*

⁹ *And from there he gave me the way of his paths,
and I opened the doors which were closed.*

¹⁰ *And I shattered the bars of iron,
for my own irons had grown hot and melted before me.*

¹¹ *And nothing appeared closed to me,
because I was the opening of everything.*

¹² *And I went toward all my bondsmen in order to loose them;
that I might not abandon anyone bound or binding.*

¹³ *And I gave my knowledge generously,
and my resurrection through my love.*

¹⁴ *And I sowed my fruits in hearts,
and transformed them through myself.*

¹⁵ *Then they received my blessing and lived,
and they were gathered to me and were saved;*

¹⁶ *Because they became my members,
and I was their head.*

¹⁷ *Glory to you, our Head, O Lord Messiah.
Hallelujah.³¹*

³¹ **James H. Charlesworth**, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament: Expansions of the "Old Testament" and Legends, Wisdom, and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes,*

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