



## World Christian Fellowship

[www.wcflondon.com](http://www.wcflondon.com)  
[wcflondon@gmail.com](mailto:wcflondon@gmail.com)

### Revelation 19 Glimpse of Heaven! Revelation 4:1-4

**Revelation 4:1-11**, *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." <sup>2</sup>Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. <sup>3</sup>And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>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!"*

*<sup>9</sup>Whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>"You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honour and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

A trip to heaven.

This is the second vision.

The first one was a vision of Christ in chapter 1 that God gave to John.

This vision about the throne of God.

**11 times**, the throne of God is mentioned in **11 verses**.

**13 times** "thrones" are mentioned. Twice regard to the 24 elders rest of the **11 times** refers to the throne of God.

The throne is not a chair.

It is not a piece of furniture.

- ✓ God doesn't sit because God is a spirit.
- ✓ God is immense and fills all things.

Here it is talking about the place where God rules His universe. The throne, the temple, and heaven are all the same things.

The glory of God shining in the midst of the temple of God in the midst of the heaven of God permeates everything.

Throne of God is symbolic of God's sovereignty over everything and everyone.

**Psalm 103:19**, *The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.*

**Psalm 47:8**, *God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.*

We will see a lot about the throne in the book of Revelation. It is mentioned **37 times**. As we come to the consummation of redemptive history as laid out in the visions of the book of Revelation, obviously God is the main actor, and so we are going to be going to this throne many times in the book of Revelation.

But the throne of God is not exclusive to the book of Revelation.

It is described in other portions of the Old and New Testament.

The throne of God is an exalted throne.

- ✓ It is a heavenly throne.
- ✓ It is an eternal throne.
- ✓ It is a throne of justice.
- ✓ It is a throne of uprightness.
- ✓ It is a throne surrounded by all the angels.
- ✓ It is a holy throne.
- ✓ It is a throne of righteousness.
- ✓ It is a throne of steadfast love.
- ✓ It is a throne of faithfulness.
- ✓ It is a throne of mercy.
- ✓ It is a throne of grace.
- ✓ It is a throne of fiery judgment.
- ✓ It is a throne for the Lamb.
- ✓ It is a Great White Throne of final judgment.
- ✓ It is a throne of glory.
- ✓ It is a throne of honour.
- ✓ It is a throne of protection.
- ✓ It is a shepherd's throne.
- ✓ It is the throne of worship.
- ✓ It is a throne of prayer.

Just a massive set of characteristics that define God reigning in His glory.

**Revelation 7:9-12**, *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup>and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup>All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup>saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."*

The picture of the throne. It is a throne of immense glory.

**Revelation 7:13-17**, *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" <sup>14</sup>And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup>Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. <sup>16</sup>They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; <sup>17</sup>for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will*

*shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

A throne for redeemed people.

It's the throne of God and the throne of angels, but it's also the throne of the redeemed who come out of the Great Tribulation.

**Revelation 21:1-7**, *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup>Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”*

*<sup>5</sup>Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”*

*<sup>6</sup>And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. <sup>7</sup>He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

This very throne will be the throne where the redeemed from the Tribulation are gathered with the angels to worship God, as well as the redeemed of all the ages.

It is a throne of everlasting worship.

## Chapter 4

Personal visit to the divine throne room of heaven.

- ✓ Identified as **the throne of God** in chapter 4.
- ✓ Identified as **the throne of the Lamb** in chapter 5.

Because they are enthroned together, the triune God.

As this chapter begins, we are drawn into the second of John's visions.

*V 1, After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."*

“After these things I looked,” or, “After these things I saw.” That is used very often in **Revelation** chapters **7, 15, 18, and 19**.

It introduces us to a new vision, a new section of the book. The scene shifts.

As we know in **chapter 1** the vision was of the person of Christ. In **chapters 2 and 3**, the letters to the churches. Now the scene shifts.

This is an entirely new scene.

As John looks, he sees and writes.

*“Behold, a door standing open in heaven,”*

He is taken in his mind to a point of spiritual clarity that is supernatural.

You can’t get there unless you are given a supernatural vision by God, where you literally are able to perceive in your mind these great realities without being there.

John in this vision sees with clarity a door standing open in heaven. John was thrilled to see that, because he was a lot like Isaiah.

When Isaiah went to the Temple, he was discouraged because of the sins of his people. God opened a vision of the throne to

Isaiah. He saw the Lord high and lifted in His temple. That was comfort to his heart because things were going so badly in Israel.

Things had been going badly in the first century as well, the New Testament era. The churches were struggling.

Five of the churches were in dire danger of being judged by their own Lord.

In the midst of this, John knows that Jerusalem has been destroyed. He can't see anything that looks like the coming of the kingdom the Lord promised. Things aren't going well in the churches. He was taken to heaven, and the door is wide open for him to enter the throne room.

This is the throne to which God holds title eternally, Sovereign of the universe.

But it is also the throne to which Christ ascended after His resurrection. He is seated on the right hand of the throne of God.

It is the place where Christ is now preparing a place for us, as **John 14** says, that we might come and be with Him.

John is thrilled and overwhelmed.

That is the reason he uses the word “*behold,*” as an exclamation.

**V 1,** *And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me,*

We have heard that voice before.

**Revelation 1:10,** *I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,*

The voice was none other than the voice of the Lord Himself. So here the Lord speaks to John.

*“Come up here,*

An invitation by way of this vision to enter into heaven.

Not too many people have this privilege.

**1 Kings 22:19,** *Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left.*

Paul doesn’t talk about the throne, but we know he went to heaven. This is a rare experience.

John must be amazingly thrilled and encouraged.

The voice is familiar to John.

*“Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”*

A commanding voice.

A loud voice.

Like a trumpet speaking.

The command is specific. “Come up here. Don’t hesitate.”

John was taken into the very throne room of God.

### **What is God going to show John?**

What must take place after these things.

The things that have already taken place, the ministry of Christ in His church.

First three chapters deal with Christ ministering in His church, writing letters to His church.

After the church is gone!

“After these things.”

This is a clear indication that what’s going to happen from chapter 4 on is not going to involve the church.

To affirm that understanding, we ought to know that from **Revelation 4:1** on, the church is never mentioned again in the book of Revelation. No mention at all.

A lot of redemptive history to cover without mentioning the church. The simple conclusion is the church isn't there, because these prophecies and visions are to show you what must take place after the church.

This is the final period of judgment leading to Christ's return and establishment of His kingdom, followed by the new heaven and the new earth.

The church is not there.

The letter to the church at Philadelphia speaking about the church.

**Revelation 3:10**, *Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

### **What hour is about to come in the whole world?**

The time of the Great Tribulation.

But to the church, our Lord says, *"I will keep you from that hour."*

The promise is the church is not going to be a part of that, and so we never see the church in those subsequent chapters.

What we do see is the throne and there are several features.

## **The throne.**

*V 2, Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.*

John trying to explain what it is to have a vision and be transported in your mind to revelatory clarity and literally to perceive heaven in its reality.

But being “in the Spirit” and given the capacity to grasp this visual reality.

John sees a throne.

It is not furniture, but there was something there that symbolized a throne, something that indicated to him that he was seeing someone enthroned.

The throne “was standing in heaven.”

It was fixed.

**Isaiah 6**, where Isaiah’s thrilled to see that God was still there, because things were looking bleak even in the church in the first century.

**Psalm 103:19**, *The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.*

**Isaiah 66:1**, *Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest?"*

There are probably three words that we could talk synonymously about in defining the throne.

**Revelation 7:14-15**, *and I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup>Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.*

It is a throne, but it is not a throne in a palace, as such.

It is a throne in the temple.

It is a throne in the dwelling place of God Himself.

**Revelation 16:17**, *Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"*

When it is talking about the throne, it is in the temple.

It is in heaven.

Those are virtually synonymous.

The throne is standing shows that it is permanent.  
It is fixed.

John finds himself at the throne. Even after all the turmoil of life on earth and the martyrdom of all the apostles and the failure of so many in the church, the throne of God is still set.

### **Sitting on the Throne.**

We go from throne to the one who is sitting on the throne.

**V 2, *One sat on the throne.***

The evidence of God's established sovereignty over the universe. No change.

History is not whimsical. No one has overthrown Him or replaced Him. There are no vacancies there.

This is the Sovereign of the universe, and He is sitting.  
The throne is standing, and He is sitting, and that speaks of permanence. It's a posture of reigning.

There is no need to give a name because it's obvious who this is. It is the Lord.

As Micaiah said in **1 Kings 22:19**; it is the Lord.

As Isaiah said in **Isaiah 6**,

*As **Ezekiel 1:26-28**, And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. <sup>27</sup>Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the colour of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. <sup>28</sup>Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.*

Ezekiel sees around the throne of this fiery representation of God, a rainbow, which obviously speaks of God's faithfulness.

So that establishes who is on the throne, and it is affirmed by **Isaiah chapter 6**, when he saw the Lord on the throne.

Both **Isaiah and Ezekiel** had similar experiences in response to that. Isaiah pronounced a curse on himself in humiliation, and Ezekiel fell on his face before the vision.

So here is the vision of the One on the throne.  
Don't ever doubt that.

God is on the throne. Nothing has changed. The throne is standing, and He is sitting.

**V 3**, *And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.*

This is the eternal God, enthroned, described in flashing, flaming, light in color, blazing glory and these jewels, obviously, enhance that.

**Why are the two stones mentioned here?**

**Why a jasper stone and a sardius stone?**

**Jasper** stone basically was a diamond. This would be a perfect diamond.

Crystal clear, and yet able to transmit all the colors and brilliance of the spectrum. That's the diamond.

**Sardius** is a red stone for which the town of Sardis was named. It is brilliant ruby, blood red, fiery bright.

So again, this contributes to the blazing reality of what John saw, which was what Ezekiel saw. He saw the throne and the One on it as if He was on fire.

The appearance of Almighty God is an appearance of clear, brilliant, fiery, blazing, crystal light that explodes, as it were, through a rainbow of colors.

This is consistent with Daniel's experience.

**Daniel 7:9-10**, *"I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; <sup>10</sup>A fiery stream issued*

*And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.*

Surrounded by angels, it is as if God is on fire on this throne.

- It is a throne of splendour.
- It is a throne of glory.
- It is a throne of judgment too.

What Ezekiel sees is the judgment of God beginning to crank up. Exactly the similar vision we see in Revelation chapter 4.

The judgment of God is beginning. That judgment will run from Revelation chapters 6 through 19.

This is where it starts to take its initial form.

Jasper was the first stone on the breast of the high priest, on the breastplate. The last one on his breastplate was a sardius.

- The jasper represented Reuben, the oldest.
- The sardius represented Benjamin, the youngest.

So, in those stones we see God proclaiming His covenant faithfulness to Israel. God is declaring His concern with Israel. He is that everlasting, eternal, glorious King, who has on His heart Israel. That hasn't changed.

God is seen in His covenant relationship to Israel, very critical to His plan.

That is why Satan, throughout human history, has done everything he could possibly do and still doing it before your very eyes today to obliterate Israel.

If Israel disappears, then Satan has conquered God.  
God is not through with Israel.

Even more than that in those two stones.

- Reuben means "behold, a son."
- Benjamin means "son of my right hand."

They speak of one who is a son, who is the Son at His right hand, even the greatest Jew of all Jews, the Messiah.

God, in the midst of winding up the final judgment, being very aware of His covenant relationship with Israel and with the fulfillment of that relationship by His Son.

The future of Israel is set.

It is a bad idea to try to obliterate them. You lose.

We see God, in a picture that is bent on judgment, remembering mercy, remembering Israel and the work of His Son at His right hand, who will fulfill that.

One day they will look on the One whom they have pierced. They will mourn for Him as an only son, a fountain of cleansing and forgiveness, and salvation will be open to them.

**V 3**, *And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.*

The rainbow happened to be like an emerald in appearance. Some think that that emerald is a reference to mercy and grace,

But what is important is that it's a rainbow because rainbows symbolize God's Faithfulness.

In Genesis, God put a rainbow in the sky to make a promise that He would never ever destroy the world by water again.

As furious as God's wrath will be, as fearsome as the scene will become, unabated through the following chapters, the rainbow is around the throne.

**Ezekiel 1:28.** The rainbow is around the throne because God is faithful to His promise and His covenant.

Wrath is never at the expense of mercy and grace.

Judgment never overrules promise, never cancels God-given inheritance. In this most dramatic picture of God, we see judgment beginning to rumble. But God has not forgotten His covenant with His people, the final bride for His Son who's at His right hand. His judgment will always be tempered by His faithfulness.

## **Around the throne.**

*V 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.*

### **Who are these twenty-four elders?**

The word "elder" *presbuteros* in Scripture refers to leaders. In the New Testament, it refers to people who lead the church. They are sitting.

Some people say that these are angels. But angels are not elders. Angels are not sitting. When we see angels, they are hovering.

These are persons who have entered into rest, who have taken a seat on a throne. A triumphal rule. They are not trying to accomplish anything.

**Revelation 5:8-10**, *Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup>And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals;*

*For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood*

*Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, <sup>10</sup>And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."*

This is a moment of triumph.

**Revelation 5:11**, *Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,*

All the heavenly hosts join in.

The twenty-four elders are not angelic beings who are serving, they are persons who are sitting in triumph and who are declaring victory.

They play harps, pouring out prayers symbolized by golden bowls of incense. They are celebrating salvation that angels never knew. Christ being slain, by His blood having purchased their salvation.

In chapter 4, the twenty-four elders are on thrones, which again affirms that they are established in a triumphal position. They are “sitting and they are clothed in white garments.”

**Revelation 2:10**, *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

We know one thing that these beings, whoever they are, are given crowns.

**Revelation 3:18**, *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

**Revelation 3:5**, *He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

These are triumphant saints clothed in white garments, holy and pure, having received crowns.

Crowns are never promised to angels or worn by angels.

This is the crown won by struggle.

These are the overcomers.

**Revelation 3:21**, *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*

They are enthroned because they have overcome.

### **What is it that overcomes?**

**1 John 5:5**, *Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

These are believers.

They must be believers.

Importantly they are in heaven, which again affirms that they have been taken out of this world and brought into the Father's house before the judgments begin.

### **Why twenty-four?**

There are twenty-four patriarchs listed in the promised seed given in Genesis from Adam to Pharez.

There were twenty-four divisions of singers in the Temple.

There were twenty-four elders appointed by David to represent the Levitical priesthood.

Twenty-four seems to be a number that sums up a representative group.

### **Could they represent Israel?**

#### **Could the twenty-four elders be Israel?**

No.

### **Why?**

Because Israel hasn't been converted yet.

Israel has not been redeemed.

That happens later in the book of Revelation.

The **144,000** haven't been chosen. They haven't gone out to preach.

The two witnesses haven't done their testimony, as in chapter 11.

The salvation of Israel has not occurred.

They aren't redeemed.

They aren't glorified.

They aren't crowned, and

They aren't reigning.

The only ones who will be saved at that time are the redeemed from the church who were gathered into heavenly glory. That's the twenty-four elders.

John sees them there, and it makes sense because they don't appear any longer in the book of Revelation, the church.

That's what happens to believers.

When we are taken to heaven, we go to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and we receive crowns. The apostle Paul talked about the crown of life, crown of glory.

We sing a song of redemption.

- They represent the church.
- They have found their place in the Father's house.
- They are the overcomers.
- They have received their crowns, living in that place that He has prepared for them.
- They watch the mighty accession of those who are coming out of the Great Tribulation, being converted

during that tribulation and seeing them enter into heaven, as chapter 7 points out.

- They are in heaven when the seventh angel sounds, and the kingdoms of this world are about to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

They are in heaven when the 144,000 are gathered in Zion. They watch from heaven as God begins to turn in judgment to the destruction of the world system, Babylon.

When Christ returns, they come back with Him. He comes with His saints in white garments. What a scene John sees.

## **Conclusion:**

We are not going to be a part of the judgment from chapter 4 on, because we are going to be up in heaven at the marriage supper of the Lamb and the reward of the *bēma* seat.

We will be casting our crowns at the feet of our Lord. When the Tribulation is over and He returns in chapter 19, we come back with Him to reign with Him in His kingdom, and then forever in the new heaven and the new earth.

You have nothing to fear.

The plan is all set.

Have faith in God and live for His glory.