

Before the Throne
Revelation 4.1-11
Sunday August 25, 2024

At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. ³And 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. ⁴Around 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. ⁵From 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, ⁶and 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: ⁷the 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. ⁸And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within,

The Sovereignty of the Throne:

- The universe is NOT earth-centered or sun-centered...
- It is God-centered!
 - and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. V.2
 - and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. V.3
 - Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders v.4
 - And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures... V.6

“The book is dominated by the idea that there is a throne in heaven at the center of all things and that there is a glorious One who sits upon that throne.” Beeke, *The Lectio Continua Expository Commentary, Revelation*, p.178

- The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Ps.103.19

The Symbolism of 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 of an emerald. V.3

- Our God is beyond description
- An attempt is made to describe the majesty and aura surrounding Him

God is depicted as a Monarch sitting on His throne ruling His realm:

- But the Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice, and he judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with uprightness. Ps.9.7-8
 - He is a good monarch who rules justly and compassionately

- The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. Ps.103.8-9

From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder... v.5

- He is a God who is to be feared, obeyed
 - Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.” Ex.20.18-20

The Significance of the Vision of the Throne:

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.” V.1

- God reveals his plans, ‘what must take place.’
- We can be assured that they will take place:
 - I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’ Is.46.9-10
 - The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. Ps.33.11
- Despite the trials to come, we take courage because the Lord is with us:
 - Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Ps.23.4
 - So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” Heb.13.6
- God’s throne of justice and power is also a throne of grace to those in Christ:
 - Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Heb.4.16
 - But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. Ps.103.17-18

Our glimpse of the Throne of God should lead us to praise and honour God because He is the Creator and sustainer of all.

and day and night they never cease to say,

*“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!”*

⁹*And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on*

the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

*¹¹ “Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.”*

Praise and worship come in response to God’s revelation of Himself!

Worshiping God:

1. There is only one God Who sits on the Throne.
 - I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. Is.45.5-6
2. Access to God comes through Jesus alone. (*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.”*)
 - *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.* Heb.10-19-22
3. He is to be worshiped for his Holiness:
 - “Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? Ex.15.11
 - Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the Lord our God is holy! Ps.99.9

Bringing Him...

- Glory –
- Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Ps.8.1
- The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Ps.19.1
- Honour –
- Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness. Ps. 29.2
- To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim.1.17
- Thanksgiving –
- Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! Ps.100.4

4. Worship is a joyful occasion!
 - Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name! Ps.97.12
5. He is worthy of our worship and He will be worshiped!
 - Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil.2.9-11

Psalm 97

The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!

² Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

³ Fire goes before him
and burns up his adversaries all around.

⁴ His lightnings light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.

⁵ The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,
before the Lord of all the earth.

⁶ The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
and all the peoples see his glory.

⁷ All worshipers of images are put to shame,
who make their boast in worthless idols;
worship him, all you gods!

⁸ Zion hears and is glad,
and the daughters of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgments, O LORD.

⁹ For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.

¹⁰ O you who love the LORD, hate evil!
He preserves the lives of his saints;
he delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

¹¹ Light is sown[□] for the righteous,
and joy for the upright in heart.

¹² Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!