

Revelation 4:1-11 RSV *The Worship of God as Creator*

John 16:33 *I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

Whenever the church is faithful to its calling to bear testimony to the truth, tribulation is bound to follow. Also, the church is in the world and suffers along with the world. War, famine, and pestilence are part a broken and fallen world.

God uses tribulation to purify and advance the Church.

This is a picture of the throne which rules the universe. In the midst of persecutions, we must keep our eye on Him!

[4:1] After this I looked, and lo, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up hither, and I will show you what must take place after this."

"After this" means in the future.

[2] At once I was in the Spirit, and lo, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne!

"In the Spirit" refers to the vision (Rev 1:10)

Revelation chapters 4 & 5 teach one main lesson: All things are governed by the throne – occupant.

This includes our trials and tribulations. Therefore, the description of The Throne precedes the symbolic prediction of the trials and tribulations the church must experience on earth. (Rev 6)

[3] And he who sat there appeared like jasper and carnelian, and round the throne was a rainbow that looked like an emerald.

A Throne!

The Throne is the very center of the universe. The term "throne" is found 17 times in Revelation 4 & 5. The Throne is in heaven.

"One seated on the Throne" is God the Father. He is not described because God cannot be described.

Jasper – white, opaque – symbolizing holiness.

Carnelian – reddish – symbolizing judgements. God cannot tolerate sin.

Emerald - rainbow – symbolizing mercy – “for God’s children, the storm is over!” Compare Ezekiel 1:28

[4] Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clad in white garments, with golden crowns upon their heads.

24 thrones and 24 elders, representing the Old & New Testaments. The 12 patriarchs and 12 apostles?

[5] From the throne issue flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder, and before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God;

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

4 living creatures in four directions, looking out to any part of the universe.

Round – the four living creatures are in a tighter ring than the rainbow or the elders.

The four living creatures are very similar to the four creatures of Ezekiel 1-10. Ezekiel 10:20 describes the living ones as “Cherubim.” Are these cherubim as well? Notice that in the Old Testament, the cherubim are a high order of angels who guard the holy things of God. (Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:20)

4 living creatures with 1) strength like a lion, 2) service like an ox, 3) intelligence as a man, 4) swiftness as an eagle = These characterizations are ascribed throughout Scripture.

[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 a flying eagle.

[8] And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all round and within, and day and night they never cease to sing, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

The Seraphim in Isaiah 6:1-4 also spoke of the thrice-holy God.

[9] And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever,

[10] the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

The 24 elders represent the entire host of the redeemed. They cast their crowns of victory before the throne because they owe their victory to the Throne-Occupant.

[11] “Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created.”

This is the song of creation.