

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### EXEGESIS VERSES 1 – 2:

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:1 Meta. tauta eidon( kai. idou. qura hnewgmenh en tw/ ouranw( kai. h fwnh. h prwth hh hkousa wj salpiggoj laloushj metl emou/ legwn( \Anaba wde( kai. deixw soi a]dei/genesqai meta. tauta

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:1 **After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven,** Meta, (pa +) tauta outoj (near dem. pro/an-p; "After these things"; same as 1:19 eidon( oraw (viaa--1s; "I looked/saw"; indicates a spiritual awareness with a physical participation) kai, (cc) idou, (part. interj.; "behold!/listen!") qura (n-nf-s; "a door") hnewgmenh anoigw (adj. ptc./PF/p/nf-s; "having been opened..and still open") en (pL) tw/ o' ouranw( ouranoj (d.a. + n-Lm-s; "the heaven"; ref. 3rd heaven) **and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said,** kai, (cc) h prwth prwtoj (d.a. + ord. adj./nf-s; "the first"; in sequence) h fwnh, (d.a. + n-nf-s; "voice") hh oj (rel. pro./af-s; "which"; ref. the voice) hkousa akouw (viaa--1s; "I had heard") wj (comp. conj.; "like/as"; simile) "the sound of" supplied salpiggoj salpigx (n-gf-s; "trumpet/metal horn" ) laloushj lalaw (adj. ptc.;p/a/gf-s; "communicating/speaking") metl meta, (pg) emou/ egw, (npg-1s; ref. John) legwn( legw (circ. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "then said") **"Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things."** \Anaba anabainw (vImp.aa--2s; "come up/ascend") w de( (adv.; "here/in this place") kai, (cs) deixw deiknumi (vifa--1s; "I will show/reveal/explain/make clear"; same as 1:1) soi su, (npd-2s; "to you") a] oj (rel. pro./an-p; "what/those things which") dei/ (vipa--3s; "must/is necessary") genesqai ginomai (compl. inf./a/d; "to take place/to come into existence") meta, (pa+) tauta outoj (near dem. pro./an-p; "after these things")

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:2 euqewj egenomhn en pneumati( kai. idou. qronoj ekeito en tw/ ouranw( kai. epi. ton qronon kaqhmenoj(

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:2 **Immediately** (corrected) **I became in spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.** euqewj (adv.; "Immediately/At once/Right away") egenomhn ginomai (viad--1s; "I became") en (pL) pneumati( pneuma (n-Ln-s; "spirit") kai, (cc) idou, (part. interj.; "behold") qronoj (n-nm-s; "a throne") ekeito keitmai (viIPFd--3s; "standing/sitting/being placed there"; the imperfect emphasizes its permanent position rather than time) en (pL) tw/ o' ouranw(

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*ouranoj* (d.a. + n-Lm-s; "the heaven") kai, (cc) *kaqhmenoij*( *kaqhmai* (circ. ptc./p/d/nmm-s; "with One seated"; circumstance of means; the subject is God, cp. 5:6; by means of God is this throne established) *epi*, (pa) *ton o`qronon qronoj* (d.a. +n-am-s)

### ANALYSIS VERSES 1 – 2:

1. Chapter 4 now advances the Revelation chronologically establishing a new setting in which further future events will be revealed.
2. That a chronological advancement is established is noted by the phrase “**After these things**/meta, tauta – meta tauta” that both introduce and end vs.1.
3. This phrase harks back to 1:19 indicating the final 3<sup>rd</sup> main division of this book as it is to be prophetically understood in history.
4. With the completion of John writing the things of the initial vision (Chapter 1) and the things which are regarding the Church Age (Chapters 2 & 3), he is now postured to record the bulk of the book with events surrounding the post-Church dispensations.
5. While we recognize the chronological significance of this section, we must not insist on a strict linear chronology and allow for parenthetical material.
6. Chapters 4 & 5 view John as propelled into the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven which is obviously timeless in nature, yet designed to introduce us to a new situation that exists there parallel to the new dispensational chronology.
7. Chapter 6 will then begin immediately with the seal judgments that will refocus our attention back to planet earth and its historical events.
8. The two phrases “**after these things**” can only refer to John’s visions and writings recorded in chapters 1-3 as its antecedent.
9. In addition, the first phrase emphasizes John’s completion of writing through chapter 3, while the final phrase emphasizes the new prophecy that will now be revealed.
10. As was prophetically revealed in the final message to the church in Laodicea, the Church had degenerated to the point that it was completely unacceptable in an experiential sense. Rev.3:15-16
11. Understanding dispensational realities, the church in Laodicea represents the conclusion of the Church Age with the removal of the Church via the rapture.
12. While the Church was given the custodialship due to the –V of the Jews at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent, the Church is removed from its custodialship due to its own –V and the custodialship is returned to the Jews.
13. Christ taught the realities behind the first changeover from the Jews to the Church in Mat.21:42-43:
  - A. Jesus Christ is the *stone* that was rejected by the Jews.
  - B. The *builders* refer to the Jewish leadership that engineered the murder of Messiah.
  - C. Although the negative Jews rejected this stone, God overruled their negative volition and made Christ the *chief corner stone* of true Israel.
  - D. Due to their gross mishandling of God’s vineyard (the context behind these verses, vss.33-41), they will be historically replaced by another group as the custodians of the kingdom.
  - E. Moses and Isaiah prophesied this judgment if the Jews continued to reject God and His Word. Deu.32:21; Isa.65:1
  - F. Christ speaks of another people, whom He calls a *nation*, but does not specify who they are.

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- G. This new nation is the Church that is comprised of people of every nation, language, geographic locale and race.
  - H. This new nation will do what Israel failed to do: produce the fruit of doctrine that God seeks. Mat.21:34 cp.vs.43
  - I. The rejection of Messiah was the final straw and God, who had been tolerating the negative Jews for many centuries, prompted the change from Israel to the Church.
14. Likewise, the Church deteriorates through –V via rejection of BD and the refusal to produce the fruit of the kingdom.
  15. Paul further taught this principle as it applied to Israel and warns the Church of the same consequences of judgment if they fail. Rom.11:1-25
    - A. Paul recognized the distinction between Israel and the Church, contrary to what Covenant Theologians now teach. Rom.11:1
    - B. He cites the fact that the Church has its historical roots in the true Hebrew faith as practiced by the Patriarchs. 11:16
    - C. The root of the domesticated olive tree represents true Israel, the beginning of which is men such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Gen.12:3
    - D. The wild olive branches are Gentile believers that partake of the blessings of the covenants through faith in Christ. Rom.11:17-20
    - E. The branches broken off represent the negative Jews that rejected their spiritual heritage and are rejected by God.
    - F. Paul further warns against any form of anti-Semitism based on the conceited notion that God had had it with the Jews. 11:18
    - G. He makes it quite clear that the church can be *cut off* and the Jews can be grafted back into the tree of blessing. 11:22b-23
    - H. He indicates a definite period of time is allotted for the Church noting that the Jewish unbelief is to continue until such time as the *fullness of the Gentiles has come in*. 11:25
    - I. This is not to be confused with the “times” of the Gentiles of Luk.21:24, since that is a totally different context and both focus on two very different things.
    - J. The “fullness” refers to the period of history in which maximum +V exists among the nations i.e., the Church Age.
    - K. The “times” refer to the period of history when various Gentile kingdoms dominate Israel and Jerusalem i.e., the 7-year Tribulational period.
    - L. However, both phrases indicate a time of Gentile dominance due to the –V of the Jews, but that their –V has a distinct limit.
  16. Any study of theological history will clearly show the parallels between the interruption of the Age of Israel and conclusion of the Church Age:
    - A. At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent, the Jews expressed maximum –V corporately and Gentiles were receptive to the POG.
    - B. At the close of the CA, the Church corporately expresses maximum –V to doctrine and the Jews will once again desire the truth. Rom.11:26 cp. Rev.7:4-8
  17. Chapter 4 vs.1 signals the end of our current dispensation and the resumption of the final missing seven years of Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week. *See Doctrine of Daniel’s 70 weeks.*
  18. Contextually and interpretatively, the phrases “**after these things**” refers to the events that begins with the ending of the CA dispensation.
  19. To this point, the book has covered some 2000 years of Church history and the balance of the book will deal in detail with Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week and the events that follow those final seven years into the Millenium and new heavens and earth.

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20. It is further noted that the term “church/ekklēsia – ekklesia” was used 19x in the first 3 chapters, but is not mentioned again until the closing of the book (Rev.22:16), as a reminder to its immediate historical recipients.
21. Only the most intellectually dishonest interpreters fail to recognize that the Church is not on the earthly historical scene when the events of chapters 4ff prophetically unfold.
22. John, **after** scribing the dictation of Christ ending chapter 3, is now ready to assimilate further information and he informs us, “**I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven**”.
23. His attention is directed from the earthly conditions that existed during the CA to the heavenly scene that is about to be revealed.
24. The aorist tense of “**I looked**” is a literary/epistolary aorist and views John looking back to the vision that he is now recording i.e., he first saw it and then recorded it.
25. The interjection “**behold**” looks to the spectacular vision he saw and is exclamatory indicating the importance behind the reader to now GAP this information.
26. The reader is once again introduced to the concept of “**a door**” in a prophetic scenario.
27. Experientially, it indicates a passage from the perspective of planet earth to the 3<sup>d</sup> heaven as John is engaged in this vision.
28. This is further confirmed by the command to “**Come up here**” in vs.1c.
29. Prophetically, the **door** harks back to Rev.3:7-8 that declares Christ as the power and authority to open and close the **door** in view and representatively indicates the CA dispensation that will end with the rapture of the Church..
30. As John is contemplating this scene, he then hears a commanding **voice** with further instruction as he records, “**and the first voice I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.”**”
31. As this verse makes clear, there were more than one speaking to John as he recorded chapters 1-3.
32. The initial voice he **had heard** was commanding with the force of **a trumpet** that instructed him to start writing this book. Rev.1:10-11
33. While it was not directly stated, for reasons noted in our preceding notes, this **voice** best equated with that of the messenger angel commissioned by Christ in assisting in the communication of the Revelation.
34. What followed in chapter one was the vision of Christ Himself and it is clear that He then became the speaker to John starting in 1:17 continuing throughout chapters 2-3.
35. That the elect angel is now communicating with John is designed to point to the conclusion of the CA and that Christ is no longer experientially in history enlightening the Church to BD.
36. With the role of the Church concluded, so is Christ’s role in His instruction to them in fulfillment of the CA.
37. At the rapture event, what the Church will literally hear from Christ is a command denoting the conclusion of the CA entering the Church into its new eternal destination. 1The.4:16-17
38. As Thessalonians makes clear, Christ will speak with the **voice** of an archangel at that event, not as a voice sounding like a **trumpet** as noted in our verse, though “**a trumpet of God**” will accompany Him as part of His call to the Church.

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39. The order of events at the rapture is that Christ will descend to the 2<sup>nd</sup> heaven, will shout out a standing order, with accompanying trumpet blasts, for the Church to receive their resurrection bodies and assemble with Him in the air for the Bema Seat judgment. Cp.1Cor.15:51-52
40. What the messenger angel that sounds like a **trumpet** now symbolically and prophetically reveals in speaking to John, is the very force of command issued by Christ at the rapture with **trumpet** calls for CA believers to, **“Come up here”**.
41. Whether these words are a direct quote that will be spoken by Christ or simply communicate the intent of His words cannot be dogmatically determined.
42. However, the conclusion of the Church beginning their eternal resurrected state will nevertheless be a corporate ascension on their way ultimately to the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven.
43. And just as John will now be shown what future events are now in store, so will the Church be revealed the eternal future of their destination.
44. The verb **“must take place”** utilizes the impersonal verb “dei/- dei/it is necessary” as in Rev.1:1 to indicate that **these things** are not merely previews of what might occur, but events that are determined by the foreknowledge and counsel of God.
45. Just as John’s state of being was altered for the **first** initial vision of 1:10ff, he now informs us that again, **“Immediately I became in spirit”**.
46. John is supernaturally transformed into a spiritual state of being as before and conveyed into the future.
47. That his state of being is again altered implies at least our proposition that John was given ample opportunity to record the dictation of Christ in chapters 2-3 in a normal state of inspiration by God the Holy Spirit.
48. That he is **‘Immediately** “ transformed and transported harks to the very sudden and almost instantaneous events surrounding the rapture. Cp.1Cor.15:51-52
49. While many may reject the fact that this event surrounding John is a symbolic way of representing the rapture and conclusion of the CA, all that we know of prophecy, dispensationalism, Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week and the fact that the term Church is no longer mentioned speaks loudly that this is the precise point at which the Church leaves the planet.
50. This is consistent with the promises that we are to be delivered from the wrath of God and this scene begins the portion of history in which the wrath of God will be poured out on His enemies. Rom.5:9; 1The.1:10; 5:9
51. While some may quibble about the fact that the first ½ of Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week is not maximum expression of God’s wrath, it is clear that the appearance of Antichrist is part of God’s judgment on –V, and this does not occur until after the Church is gone and the Age of Israel is resumed. 2The.2:7-8, 11-12
52. John then informs us that the place of destination in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven is the throne room of God and declares, **“and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne”**.
53. It is this aspect of his vision that becomes the focal point of the scene he observed.
54. While some have suggested that the imperfect of “keimai – kaimai/**was standing**” indicates that this **throne** was new or had just been placed here for these events, this word is certainly used of inanimate things that simply occupy some spot. Joh.19:29
55. While God is depicted as having a portable **throne** in certain parts of the OT (Eze.10:1), or moves it from place to place as needed (Dan.7:9), these verses emphasize God’s sovereignty expressed over specific nations; this **throne** is to be regarded as God’s permanent seat of power and authority over all nations at all times.

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56. The **throne** is established as the center of all that John sees and is designed to stress the Divine attribute of sovereignty executing the POG. 1Kgs.22:19; Isa.6:1; Eze.1:26
57. God is **Spirit** and John is communicating to human beings with no frame of reference for the realities of heaven and these realities are communicated in such a way as to help us understand.
58. While not directly mentioned here, the “**One sitting on the throne**” is reference to God the Father, as later context will establish. Cp.4:5b (H.S.); 5:6 (Christ)
59. It points to the authority of the Father as the ultimate authority representing the Godhead directing complete control over all future events to be recorded.
60. It denotes that God rules at all times as the sovereign King of the universe and His sovereignty indicates the reality and nature of God’s volition.
61. Since God possesses volition, He makes decisions, plans and policies that man may accept or reject according to their volition. Gen.1:3, 26
62. Due to His nature, He has no rivals as He exercises supreme power and rule over everyone and everything and there is nothing outside His jurisdiction. Deu.4:39; Psa.93:1-2
63. As the absolute authority in the universe, He alone possesses authority as a part of His essence, which He may or may not exercise as He sees fit. Job 34:13-15
64. All other authorities, human and angelic, have their power delegated to them by God. Dan.4:32, 35; Rom.13:1-7
65. When addressing the sovereignty of God, we must recognize four distinct applications of Divine sovereignty that include:
  - A. God’s directive will—What God actually desires.
  - B. God’s permissive will—What God allows or tolerates.
  - C. God’ geographical will –Where God want his creation to be.
  - D. God’s overruling will – God’s intervention in judgment.
66. It is the latter of these applications that will be emphasized in the following chapters of Revelation as God is going to overrule Satan, his demons and all unbelievers by establishing His Son as the Sovereign Ruler of planet earth. Rev.11:15-18; 12:10; 19:6
67. All the events that will follow focuses of the Father’s sovereign plan (POG) as represented in the **throne** of God, including Himself as seated on the **throne**, what is around the **throne** (vs.4), what proceeds from the **throne** (vs.5), what is before the **throne** (vs.6) and finally what is between the **throne** (5:6).
68. It is reemphasized that there is only **One Person sitting on the throne** and it is clear Christ is not seated with the Father as He was during the CA. Rev.3:21 cp.Col.3:1
69. This is due to the fact that He had arisen, returned to planet earth for the Church and has not resumed a sitting position since He is about to engage in the execution of the wrath of God.
70. A comparison of the earthly tabernacle/temple with the heavenly throne room reveals a series of parallels as we would expect (Heb.8:5; 9:23):
  - A. The Most Holy Place, Exo.26:30-35 cp. the **Throne** of God the Father, Rev.4:2.
  - B. Ark of the Covenant, Exo.26:33 cp. Rev.11:19
  - C. Cherubim over the Ark, Exo.25:17-21 cp. Four living Creatures, Rev.4:6.
  - D. Altar of Incense, Exo.31,8; cp. Rev.8:3-5.
  - E. The Golden Lampstand, Exo.25:31-40 cp. the Seven Lamps of Fire, Rev.4:5.
  - F. The Bronze Laver, Exo.30:18 cp. the Sea of Glass, Rev.4:6.
  - G. The Altar of Burnt Offering, Exo.31:9 cp., the Golden Altar, Rev.9:13.
  - H. Priests cp. Elders, a Kingdom of Priests, Rev.1:6; 4:4

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 3 – 4:

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:3 kai. ō kaqhmenoj ofnoioj orasei liqwl iaspidi kai. sardiw( kai. i#ij kuklogen tou/qronou ofnoioj orasei smaragdinw(

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:3 **And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance;** kai, (cc) ō kaqhmenoj kaqhmai (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/d/nm-s; "He who was sitting/the One sitting"; ref. the Father) ofnoioj (adj. of similarity--nm-s; "was like/resembling/looking like") iaspidi iaspij (n-df-s; "jasper"; used 4x, 1x of God other 3 of the New Jerusalem; This stone is not like the modern day jasper, inexpensive and opaque ranging in color from yellow to red; per Rev.21:11; this stone is very expensive and translucent, more like a diamond) liqwl liqoj (n-dm-s; "stone") kai, (cc) sardiw( sardion (n-dn-s; "sardius/ruby"; blood red stone; the stone from which Sardis derived its name; cp. 1:11; 3:1; used 2x cp. Rev.21:20) orasei ofasij (n-df-s; "in appearance/what is seen/the visible form") **and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.** kai, (cc) "there was" supplied i#ij (n-nf-s; "an encircling radiance/halo/rainbow"; used 2x) kuklogen (pg; "around/on all sides of") tou/o qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s; "the throne" same as 4:2) ofnoioj (a--nm-s; "like") smaragdinw( smaragdinoj (ap-dm-s; "an emerald"; a translucent green stone, unique and hard to find two alike; hapax) orasei ofasij (n-df-s; "in appearance")

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:4 kai. kuklogen tou/qronou qronouj eikosi tessarej( kai. epi. touj qronouj eikosi tessaraj presbuterouj kaqhmenouj peribebhmenouj en imatipij leukoij kai. epi. taj kefalaj autwh stefanouj crusouj(

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:4 **And around the throne were twenty-four thrones;** kai, (cc) kuklogen (pg; "around/encircling") tou/o qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s; "the throne") eikosi (card. adj./am-p; "twenty"; used 11x +) tessarej( (card. adj./am-p; "four"; used 41x; the number 24 is used 9x in the Bible; 3x in the OT with no clear symbolic use and 6x in the NT and only in Rev.) qronouj qronoj (n-am-p; "thrones") **and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting,** kai, (cc) epi, (pa; "upon") touj ō qronouj qronoj (d.a. + n-am-p; "the thrones") eikosi (card. adj./am-p +) tessaraj tessarej (card. adj./am-p; "twenty-four") presbuterouj presbuteroj (ap-am-p; "elders/presbyters"; used 66x) kaqhmenouj kaqhmai (adj. ptc./p/d/am-p; "sitting"; contextually denoting those enthroned in positions of honor) **clothed in white garments,**

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**and golden (corrected) wreaths on their heads.** *peribebhmenouj periballw* (*adj. ptc./PF/m/am-p; "having clothed themselves"*) *en* (*pI; "with/in"*) *leukoij leukoj* (*a--In-p; "white/radiant/brilliantly white"*) *imatipij imation(n-In-p; "garments/robes/clothing")* *kai, (cc)* *crusoujĥ* (*a--am-p; "golden"; used 18x*) *stefanouj stefanoj* (*n-am-p; "wreaths/victor's wreaths"*) *epi, (pa; "upon") autwh autoj* (*npgm3p; ref. 24 elders*) *taj h kefalaj kefalh, (d.a. + n-af-p; "heads")*

### ANALYSIS VERSES 3 – 4:

1. Having established the focal point of this heavenly scenario as the **throne** of the Sovereign of the universe **and** its occupant, he now moves to a description of **He who was sitting** on the **throne**, who is God the Father. Cp. the distinction between the Father and the Son in Rev.5:6-7; 6:16
2. However, we do know that Christ had up to this point been sharing the Father's **throne** and His absence denotes He had arisen to resurrect the Church. Cp.Rev.3:21b
3. That Christ shared His Father's seat of rule proclaims His solidarity with God in the execution of the Father's plan for creation.
4. Whatever is true of the Father is now true of the Son in equality of Sovereignty.
5. For the believer to understand God and His plan, he must recognize that God's revelation of Himself centers fully in His Son. Heb.1:1-3
6. Christ, who is *the exact representation of His nature*, is the vehicle of manifesting the Father in a visible way to the eye.
7. God is spirit, but has designed through the hypostatic union a physical revelation or manifestation of Himself on behalf of His creatures.
8. That it is the Father that is now in view declares His supreme authority in the Godhead, as the sponsor of the Son in fulfillment of His plan for mankind.
9. Therefore, the description of His Person is designed to relate the realities of His Sovereignty as fulfilled through Christ.
10. God does not require this visible appearance or any other localized residence in the material universe, since He transcends His creation in immensity and to infinity.
11. His appearance is to validate the fact that as the supreme authority in the universe, He is actively present as the author and initiator of the POG and is to be looked upon as the One in ultimate control of the destiny of His creation.
12. This is designed as encouragement for believers in light of the fact that contextually, the posture of His **throne** and rule is for the purpose of carrying out judgment upon the world of –V in a form of wrath never witnessed before, or will again, on planet earth.
13. In spite of the pervasive evil that will engulf mankind and the catastrophic phenomenon of destruction that will take place, God's presence in the heavenly battle HQ states unequivocally that He is in total control over the A/C.
14. John's vision of the Father transcends any human form by which He can manifest Himself (cp.Dan.7:9) centering on the dazzling brilliance illuminating from Him, **"like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance"**.



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15. What John saw here is not described using an anthropomorphism as common in the Scriptures, but denotes real substance of light emanating from the glory of God's essence.
16. John has not been cast into an imaginary fantasy world, but a realm of spiritual reality in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven that is just as tangible in its environment as the things we experience on earth.
17. The 3<sup>d</sup> heaven is described in terms of real substance including beautiful colors, noises, voices, angels and elders and other inanimate objects as part of its existence.
18. God's essence is described emphasizing its similarity in manifestation compared to two precious stones, the **jasper and sardius**.
19. It is important to remember that we cannot fully grasp the essential glory of God's essence, since God dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. 1Tim.6:16
20. John is describing the radiance and color of God's manifested essence in terms of semblance with objects he and the rest of mankind is familiar with and would communicate its meaning.
21. This is emphasized in the two uses of the adjective '**like**/ὅμοιος – homoios" that denotes a similarity or resemblance and does not demand an exact duplication.
22. That the noun '**stone**/λίθος" is singular in number, yet descriptive by two precious stones indicates that the representation is dual in nature, yet one object.
23. The first **stone**, the **jasper**, is not the modern, cheaper version that is found common today.
24. The modern **jasper stone** can vary in color from black, to purple, to yellow, to red, is mostly opaque, and can be purchased quite inexpensively.
25. This **jasper stone** is described more fully in Rev.21:11 and is seen to be crystal-clear and very expensive.
26. It denotes that this **stone** is very translucent, allowing light to be refracted as a crystal might and is more closely associated with a very pure diamond.
27. The second **stone**, the **sardius**, is most commonly fiery red in color, also translucent and is generally equated with the modern day ruby.
28. The purpose for God's manifesting the glory of His essence in likeness of these two stones is two-fold:
  - A. To proclaim the eternity of His rule/sovereignty.
  - B. To proclaim through whom His Sovereignty is manifested.
29. As with deciphering the name of the church at Sardis, the key to understanding the interpretation of these two stones is found in the breastplate of the High Priest in the OT, on which the first and last stones were the **jasper and sardius**. Exo.28:15-21
30. As Exo.28:9-10 make clear, the stones were set in sequence according to the birth of the twelve sons of Jacob representing the twelve tribes of Israel.
31. Therefore, the two stones represent Benjamin via the **jasper** and Reuben via the **sardius**, the youngest and eldest of Jacob's sons in order.
32. That these two stones represent both the first and last sons of Jacob first and foremost gives visual confirmation of God's eternity as the first and the last as declared in Rev.1:8; 22:13
33. God existed before anything else, is the only One that possesses eternal life as part of His essence and will continue to exist for all eternity.
34. That God possesses eternal life, is the creator of the universe and all creation angelic and human, in and of itself declares His sovereignty.

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35. That eternal life is of necessity for a sovereign rule over creation, then anyone that would claim that rule must also possess eternal life.
36. Hence, enter in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Joh.4:13-14
37. It is then the names of the two sons represented by these two stones that now takes on significance:
  - A. Benjamin means “*son of my right hand*”.
  - B. Reuben means “*behold a son!*”
38. It is a declaration that the Father is about to install His Son as the ruler over planet earth and all creation.
39. Both of these designations are designed to communicate the reality that God is going to resolve the issues of the angelic conflict through His firstborn (Heb.1:5-6), the son of His right hand (Heb.1:3).
40. The purpose for reversing the order of birth placing Benjamin (**jasper**), the last born first and then Reuben (**sardius**), the first born last must be understood in view of the Father communicating the physical reality of His Sovereignty.
41. As God the Father, He has always been and always will be pure Deity.
42. However, His **appearance** reflects the physical manifestation of His Sovereignty of rule with that fulfilled in the unique Person of Christ who is both God and man.
43. It points to the reality that Jesus Christ, though eternal in Deity came into existence in the form of man (Phi.2:6-7) in hypostatic union and in this new Person, based on the success of His mission, was then promoted as first inheriting all things. Joh.3:35
44. To emphasize the Son as “last” or “youngest” first points to the reality that as the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Godhead, Jesus Christ as both God and man did not eternally preexist and came into existence as God in time.
45. Jesus Christ is the physically manifested reality of the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Godhead, whose name Yahweh, “I will become that which I will become”, so identified with.
46. It looks to the physical manifestation of God in Person being realized in the newness of Christ as the youngest or last member of the Godhead in Person.
47. Yet, as God’s uniquely begotten Son He was true humanity, and via the resurrection that confirmed His Person of Deity possessing eternal life, Christ is also the first born or eldest emphasizing His right to rule.
48. As the last, the focus is on His complete Person possessing the right of Sovereignty being God, while being the first, the focus is on His humanity validating that right through His resurrection.
49. Further, it emphasizes that the nature of God’s chosen ruler was one of both God the Son condescending into union with the humanity of Jesus Christ (The 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Godhead in obedience to the Father’s plan) and the total subservient nature of Christ’s performance in the hypostatic union. Cp.Mar.9:35
50. Hence, the King of Kings is not only the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega in Deity, He truly is the Last and the First, the Youngest, yet the Firstborn via the hypostatic union and resurrection.
51. The hypostatic union came first, the resurrection as the firstborn came last.
52. Hence, the dual nature of this singular **stone**.
53. That the Father is manifesting that His Sovereignty and Eternality is found through the Person of His Son, it is proper to reflect Himself in this way.
54. The colors are also significant in communicating this fact.
55. The clarity of the **jasper** emphasizes purity or +R, true of both His Deity and humanity, while the red of the **sardius** indicates the principle of sacrifice focusing on His humanity.

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56. Both aspects are very evident in the life of His Son that makes eternal life for mankind possible to coincide with His eternal reign.
57. John then refocuses upon the **throne** itself emphasizing God's Sovereign plan, **“and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance”**.
58. This **emerald** colored **rainbow** encompassed **the throne** on all sides and symbolically pictures the faithfulness or trustworthiness of God securely exercising His sovereignty.
59. The **rainbow** itself is designed to call to mind the events following the flood of Noah and the promises that God made to him.
60. In Genesis, the **rainbow** is declared to *be for a sign of a covenant* that God made to Noah and is a very fitting symbol of God's faithfulness to His promises. Gen.9:9-17
61. It serves to reflect the reality that God will keep His word and will fulfill every covenant or promise that He has made with men.
62. That this **rainbow** is **emerald** dark green denotes the principle of life, particularly new life (Joe.2:22), and again points to His resurrected Son, Who has the eternal life of Deity as part of His essence, as He who will fulfill all God's dealings with man in executing God's promises.
63. The entirety of the manifestation of the Father and His **throne** points to His attributes of Eternal life and Sovereignty that must go hand in hand and the principles of +R and sacrifice as the necessary ingredients for His eternal Sovereignty to become a physical reality in Person over creation.
64. That God the Father is seen as faithful in keeping His promises then sheds light on vs.4, **“And around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden wreaths on their heads”**.
65. This verse has created all kinds of conjectures as to identifying the 24 **elders** in view to include:
  - A. They symbolize the 24 books of the OT.
  - B. They are angelic creatures of which we have no further knowledge.
  - C. They are a collection of OT and NT believers.
  - D. They are used symbolically to represent the Church.
  - E. They are 24 literal Church Age believers.
66. The first two are easily dismissed as neither the books of the Bible or angels are ever referred to as **elders**.
67. Neither is either category ever provided with victory **wreaths** or personified as having such.
68. The term **“elder/presbuteroj – presbuteros”** literally means “one of older age” and its morphology denotes a transition from its literal meaning to a technical yet broader designation of one that holds an office in the Church:
  - A. In the OT its meaning was first used to denote chronological age (Gen27:15) and then was adopted to refer to those holding positions of authority both religiously and politically (Exo.3:16,18, et al).
  - B. This definition carried forward into NT times with reference to the religious/political leaders of Israel as indicated in the Gospels. Mat.16:21; Mar.8:31; Luk.9:22
  - C. As the Church progressed in history, this term was adopted to refer to those that held office in the Church. Cp.Act.4:23 to 14:23

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- D. Initially, an elder was distinct from an Apostle (Act.15:2), but later it absorbed even that office (Pet.5:1; 2Joh.1:1; 3Joh.1:1).
- E. Its most technical use looks to the communicative offices of Apostle, prophet, evangelist and pastor-teacher (Eph.4:11 cp.Act.20:17 cp.vs.28) of which holds rank in authority and importance in the Church (1Tim.5:17).
69. Based on its morphological history and contextually, these 24 **elders** must be identified with the Church, the Royal Priesthood, who has been translated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven and already evaluated at the Bema Seat, since they have their **wreaths**. 2Cor.5:10
  70. This dismisses the theory that those in view are a collection of OT and NT believers.
  71. The 24 **thrones** themselves represent seats of authority by which the 24 **elders** have been empowered.
  72. That they encircle God's **throne** in fashion after the **emerald rainbow** (repeat of the preposition "**around**/kukl ogen" cp.vs.3b), indicates a promise of God fulfilled on their behalf to rule in authority.
  73. Their dress and crownly adornment further provide insight by which this promise is fulfilled as John notes that they were "**clothed in white garments, and golden wreaths on their heads**".
  74. These 24 **elders** right to rule combined with the **white garments and wreaths** hark back to the faithful in the 4 churches of Smyrna, Thyratira, Sardis and Philadelphia. Rev.2:10, 26-27; 3:4,11
  75. This is seen in contrast to -V lukewarm believers not wearing **white garments** of which the wreath and national rule is a moot point. Rev.3:18
  76. As noted in our analysis of those verses, the symbolism behind the **white garments** indicates a Christian life producing maximum Divine good production and the **wreaths** indicate one holding their course to the end.
  77. It is +V believers of this ilk (Overcomers that "*keeps My deeds until the end*") that are promised to be given "*authority (and rule) over the nations*". Rev.2:26-27
  78. The **twenty-four elders** sitting on these **thrones** are **twenty-four** Church Age shepherd-communicators that represent the Divinely appointed governing council to rule the nations as established by the Sovereignty of the Father and executed through His Son.
  79. This in contrast to the -V world rulers that will attempt to establish a one world rulership under the antichrist.
  80. Further, these pastors successfully fulfilled their duty and function of office as prescribed by the Word of God.
  81. That pastors are in view is seen in the fact that the **wreaths** worn are made of gold, which is symbolic of Deity and looks to God the Father as the author of the plan.
  82. That they are adorned with gold victory **wreaths** reflects their faithfulness in representing the POG in its communication and representation.
  83. Now comes the question for any interpreter, why the number 24 and is it literal or only symbolic?
  84. The fact of the matter is that it is both.
  85. These are 24 literal Church Age communicators John now views and they are representative of the Church and its place in the post-Church prophetic history.
  86. This number is used in the Bible only in a symbolic way in the book of Revelation.

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87. That they represent the Church in its totality, and therefore the Church's place prophetically in the POG is found in the division of the OT priesthood and the 24 orders that were established for the Levitical priesthood under David. 1Chr.24:1-18
88. There were thousands of priests in the OT, and will be millions of royal priests in Ph<sub>3</sub>; however, all the priests could not actually serve at the same time so they were divided into 24 orders that served on a rotating basis. Luk.1:8-9
89. When all the 24 priests representing their particular order met together, they represented the totality of the priesthood, just as these 24 **elders** represent the universal, royal priesthood.
90. While the 24 **elders** represent the Church, this does not mean that all believers will rule over nations in the millenium as so proclaimed in Rev.3:16-17.
91. Therefore, these 24 **elders** more specifically represent the totality of all prize-winning believers that will rule with Christ in this fashion as royal dignitaries representing the Church.
92. That Divinely established government is in view is further supported in the numerology of 24 as a multiple of 12 signifying an elected/chosen human government (12 tribes, 12 apostles, etc.) as universally perfected and completed by the Godhead:
  - A. 3x4 = the trinity (Godhead) and universality or completeness (4 corners of the earth). (*God sponsored government.*)
  - B. 2x6 = Christ (hypostatic union) and man (flesh). (*Christ is the agent for men to rule in God's government.*)
  - C. 3x8 = The eternal plan as established by God (8 looks to the eternal state following 7000 years of human history). (*This government is for all eternity.*)
  - D. 6x4 = man and universal fulfillment. (*Man will rule with God over His creation.*)
93. The bottom line sum of the number 24 denotes that since 12 is a number that indicates national rule (Israel=12 tribes), then 24 indicates the addition of the Church in God's Sovereign design for a world government.
94. The Church as a nation is the completion of the government designed to rule as established by God, in conjunction with Israel, as the "graft in the domesticated olive branch". Cp.Rom.11:17ff
95. The Divine design for international rule and authority over nations with Christ is fulfilled through two nations, Israel and the Church.
96. These 24 **elders** are literal 24 pastors that are given the prestigious honor of not only representing the Church in its entirety, but all +V believers that complete their course to include OT saints, who will rule with them in the millenium.
97. Now comes the question as whether we can more exactly identify who these literal 24 **elders** are.
98. Obviously, we don't know specifically by name who they are, or when exactly they existed in the CA.
99. One obvious consideration is that the 12 Apostles might be of this group.
100. This is mitigated against for the following reasons:
  - A. It is highly unlikely John (as the final representation of the 12) is viewing himself as one of these and the most natural reading and setting is an observer of 24 entirely different men.
  - B. The 12 Apostles are promised that they would sit with Christ on 12 **thrones** and judge the 12 tribes of Israel as part of their SG<sub>3</sub>. Luk.22:28-30
  - C. However, these are earthly **thrones** during the Millennium, does not take place until after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent and the establishment of Christ's earthly rule. Rev.20:4

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- D. While the 12 are certainly the foundation of the Church and worthy of any honor they receive, they more represent the tie between Israel and the Church and their place of honor is generally observed to be reserved as distinguished with Israel and the New Jerusalem. Cp.Rev.21:12,14
  - E. Further, our heavenly scenario is temporary with the Church waiting behind the scenes of tribulational history and not noting a permanent residence of established **thrones** and place of rule.
  - F. These 24 **elders** will relocate from the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven to their earthly place of rule with Christ at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent.
  - G. That the emphasis is ruling over nations in addition to Israel, it makes better sense that these communicators are Gentile communicators that will rule over all the other nations with Christ excluding the 12 Apostles ruling with Christ over Israel.
101. That the actual number 24 is only used symbolically in the book of Revelation, it is there that documentation should lie as to who more specifically these men are.
  102. And that is found in part in the messages to the 4 Churches to which the descriptions of these men hark back too:
    - A. That these 7 churches emphasize the post-Apostolic period of the CA, the extant communicative gift of shepherds in view are the messengers/pastor-teachers of local churches carrying the Church through the remainder of the CA.
    - B. Smyrna indicates these are P-T's that are martyred in the CA due to their faithfulness to the truth receiving their **wreaths**. *(Note the further association with the elders with those saints that die during the tribulation, of which many are martyred, Rev.7:13-14).*
    - C. Thyatira indicates they are pastors that kept themselves and their church totally separate from any forms of religiosity and only executed their ministry under the true Christian faith and directives of BD.
    - D. Sardis indicates that they maximized in the Divine good production of their own lives personally and in their ministry.
    - E. Philadelphia indicates they shepherded a local church that was corporately adjusted and fulfilled their representation as the pillar and support of the POG throughout their ministries and they represent all of the other believers within that received their **wreaths**..
  103. Who else, but 24 martyred faithful communicators that headed corporately adjusted local churches in the CA would be better candidates for God to pick to represent all other +V prize-winning believers and the Church Universal as the Divinely appointed rulers over the world.
  104. While this number may seem few over a course of some 2000 years, it truly represents the scarcity of adjusted local churches throughout the post-Apostolic CA.
  105. This is not to say there are only 24 adjusted P-T's or churches throughout the CA.
  106. Only that by comparison to all the P-T's and churches throughout the CA, those with the spiritual tenacity even to face death because of their faith (Rev.2:13) and holding the distinction of heading corporately adjusted churches, are of the minority, just as the 7 messages revealed.
  107. That these 24 P-T's lives and ministries were cut short in time, it is most befitting that they are given a place of early distinction in heaven as a special reward to represent all of the faithful +V and the Church itself.

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 5 – 6:

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:5 kai. ek tou/ qronou ekporeuontai astrapai. kai. fw nai. kai. brontai( kai. epta. lampadej puroj kaiomenai enwpion tou/ qronou( a[ eisin ta. epta. pneumata tou/ qeou(

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:5 **And from the throne proceed flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder.** *kai, (cc) ek (pAbl; "out from") tou/o` qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-AbIm-s) ekporeuontai ekporeupmai (vipd--3p; "keeps on proceeding/going out from") astrapai. astraph, (n-nf-p; "flashes of lightning/flushing rays of light"; used 9x) kai, (cc) fw nai. fwnh, (n-nf-p; "audible sounds") kai, (cc) brontai( bronth, (n-nf-p; "thunder"; used 12x) **And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;** *kai, (cc) "there were" supplied epta, (card. adj./nf-p; "seven") lampadej lampaj (n-nf-p; "lamps/torches") puroj pur (n-gn-s; "of fire") kaiomenai kai,w (circ. ptc./p/p/nf-p; "burning/while have been ignited or lit") enwpion (pg; "before/facing") tou/o` qronou( qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s) a[ oj (rel. pro./nn-p; "which things"; neuter plural encompasses all of the descriptive nuances of the 7 lamps and reflects the proper gender of that which it is that follows) eisin eimi, (vipa--3p; "keep on being") ta. to, epta, (d.a. + card. adj./nn-p) pneumata pneuma (n-nn-p; "Spirits"; ref. the H.S.) tou/o` qeou( qeoj (d.a. + n-gm-s)**

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:6 kai. enwpion tou/ qronou wj qalassa ualinh omoia krustallw Kai. en mesw tou/ qronou kai. kuklw tou/ qronou tessara zwba gemonta ofqalmwh empros qen kai. opis qen

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:6 **and before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal;** *kai, (cc) enwpion (pg; "before/in front of") tou/o` qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s) "there was" supplied wj (comp. conj.; "as it were/resembling") qalassa (n-nf-s; "a sea"; used 91x) ualinh ualinoj (a--nf-s; "glass/extremely shining like a mirror/a reflective and clear substance, like ice"; used 3x) omoia ofmoioj (comp. adj.--nf-s; "similar to") krustallw krustalloj (n-dm-s; "a purified or highly finished rock crystal"; used 2x; an unbreakable substance) **and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.** *Kai, (cc) en (pL) mesw mesoj (ap-Ln-s; "middle/midst/center") tou/o` qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s) kai, (cc) kuklw (pg; "around/round about") tou/o` qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s) tessara tessarej (card. adj./nn-p; "four") zwba zwbn (n-nn-p; "living beings/living creatures"; used 23x;**

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*outside of Revelation translated "animals") gemonta gemw (circ. ptc./p/a/nn-p; "being filled with/covered with"; used 11x) ofqal mwh ofqal moj (n-gm-p; "eyes") emprosqen (ab; "on the front of") kai, (cc) opisqenl (ab; "on the back of/behind")*

### ANALYSIS VERSES 5 – 6:

1. With the theme of God's Sovereignty established as fulfilled through His Son and as Divinely ordained for men, this heavenly scenario continues to reveal further concepts regarding the Father's plan in this regard.
2. John continues to record his sensory experiences now turning to the audio and visual phenomena that he observed.
3. He relates the information of vs.5a using a graphic present tense designed to bring the reader into the ongoing action of God's place of rule, "**And from the throne proceed (p.a.i., 'keeps on proceeding) flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder'**".
4. This imagery of **lightning** and the associated **sounds** with **thunder** proceeding from **the throne** itself is very much like that of Exo.19:16 and is designed to produce the effect of righteous fear as also denoted in Exo.20:18.
5. This ominous ongoing display of power is designed to bring one to the realization that God's impending judgment is about to fall in a continuous fashion over time.
6. As John notes, there are three distinct phenomena associated with **the throne** including, **lightning, sounds and thunder**.
7. Some have interpreted the term **sounds** to mean voices, suggesting that God Himself announces specific information.
8. While the things do communicate, the simplest meaning of the term is "**sounds/noises**" and refers to the ominous and threatening noises that are emanating from God's **throne**.
9. The **sounds** would include the types of noises that are associated with an approaching thunderstorm like rushing winds, distant rumbling, the crack of **lightning**, etc.
10. This is all designed to emphasize God's omnipotent power in judgment and is designed to strike fear into the heart of those that would continue to oppose Him.
11. This **throne** of judgment may be likened to a war chariot in preparation to unleash on a corrupt and rebellious world the just and necessary judgments to establish God's Divine government through His Son as ruler and bring in everlasting peace.
12. That this judgment is literally coming **from** out of the **throne** indicates God's overruling will of wrath against the unrighteousness of negative mankind. Rom.1:18
13. John next observes things facing the **throne** with the first thing being, "**And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne**" that He immediately identifies for us, "**which are the seven Spirits of God**".
14. Again, as initially established in Rev.1:4, these are not **seven** distinct **spirits**, but is a symbolic number that is used to express the **seven**-fold ministry of God's perfect Holy Spirit. Isa.11:2; Zec.4:1-6,10
15. This is an example of grammatical pleonasm, a construction that uses more words than are necessary to express the single idea.
16. Further, the imagery of **lamps of fire** is designed to emphasize the illuminating ministry of the H.S., Who is the ultimate revealer of God. 1Cor.2:10-12



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17. The fact that God the H.S. is viewed as **before** or in the presence of the **throne of God** looks to the doctrine of eternal procession, the theological reality that the H.S. is sent by the Father and the Son and does not function of His own accord. Joh.7:39; 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:13
18. This indicates that there has never been a time in the history of mankind that God has not made available an accurate revelation or communication of his plan for men and those that are ignorant of it is only due to their unbelief.
19. Just as the golden lampstand in the holy place provided illumination for the Levitical priests to perform their functions in orientation to the POG, so the H.S. provides us illumination through the Word of God, so those that choose can fulfill their priestly function before God.
20. Later, we are told that these **seven Spirits of God** are *sent out into all the earth* suggesting that the number 7 further represents the 7 continents and the reality that the ministry of the H.S. is worldwide. Rev.5:6
21. All of this denotes that grace proceeds judgment and that God's wrath to come is in the face of incorrigible –V that dominates the face of the planet in this time in history.
22. John then describes the next notable thing in front of **the throne** in vs.6a, "**and before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal**".
23. Again, John uses a comparative to note that what he saw resembled **a sea**.
24. This denotes a large expanse **before the throne** and fits descriptively with the same one Ezekiel observed, since both are described as being of the same nature as **crystal**, that was located below **the throne**. Cp.Eze.1:22,25-26
25. What is depicted here is probably a somewhat bluish (the color of seawater), clear and transparent, hard and shiny surface **before the throne of God**.
26. This corresponds to the bronze laver in the Tabernacle and Temple that was filled with water for the cleansing of the priests and is a symbolic method of portraying the R<sub>B</sub> adjustment and Ph<sub>2</sub> sanctification.
27. The reason that the **sea** of crystalline transparent glass is solidified like ice is designed to stand as a permanent, silent tribute to the work of doctrine in time and the experiential cleansing provided by R<sub>B</sub>. 1Joh.1:9
28. We recognize that the Word of God is the agent of Ph<sub>2</sub> sanctification and while this expanse can have reflective properties indicating R<sub>B</sub>, it is now solidified and as Ezekiel noted, fully transparent allowing the occupants of the **throne** room to observe the events that are about to transpire. Exo.24:10; Eze.1:26
29. Its solidification and transparency indicates that the Church, now in resurrection, is in a permanent eternal state of experiential righteousness (no further need of cleansing) and has the physical means to transcend time and view God's plan for time and ongoing history on God's big screen.
30. This indicates that it is based on experiential righteousness/Ph<sub>2</sub> sanctification that God's plan for His Divine government is realized.
31. While all believers of the Church will have a place of authority in God's government, only those that completed their course will reap the maximum benefits of ruling with Christ over the nations.
32. The final major players in relation to God's Sovereignty are now initially introduced in vs.6b, "**and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind**".
33. While vss.7-8 will more fully describe these **living** beings, it is our verse that establishes their primary role as applied to God's sovereignty and His plan for mankind.

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34. There is not much agreement among interpreters as to who or what they are.
35. The phrase, ‘**in the center**/midst/middle of **the throne**’ first indicates that the One on **the throne** and these **living** beings are so intimately related that they actually share in **the throne** and God’s Sovereign rule.
36. The fact that there are **four** of them is further significant, since this is the number of universality and totality representing to include the earth, world, mankind and Israel:
  - A. There are 4 compass points: North, South, East and West.
  - B. There are 4 elements: fire, water, earth and air.
  - C. There are 4 seasons: winter, spring, summer and fall.
  - D. There are 4 general divisions of the human race: nations, tribes, peoples and tongues.
  - E. There are 4 standards representing the 12 tribes of Israel that were placed surrounding the tabernacle at each compass point: East, South, West and North: Num.2
37. Therefore, these **living creatures** represent in some way God’s government and activities with respect to the world and mankind as fulfilled through the nation Israel.
38. That they are positioned **around the throne** indicates that each one was located apparently at one of the compass points.
39. The massive amount of **eyes** that they possessed is symbolic denoting their extreme intelligence.
40. While they are first viewed with **eyes in front and behind**, they are furthered viewed **full of eyes around and within** in vs.8b.
41. In both cases, their **eyes** indicate they are constantly observing and monitoring the affairs of the POG on His behalf as applied to the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven as well as planet earth.
42. This does not mean that these beings are omniscient (only God is omniscient cp.Mat.24:36; 1Pet.1:12), only that in representation of God’s omniscience, they are imparted with all the knowledge and insight necessary in fulfilling God’s Sovereignty of Divine rule.
43. That their **eyes** are first noted **in front and behind** indicates their knowledge as applied to history in time to include past, current and future events and developments.
44. That they are further envisioned as *around and within* indicates that their knowledge is not only limited to time, but transcends, even within the eternal state of the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven.
45. Therefore, their function in operation with God looks to overseeing the fulfillment of God’s plan of Sovereignty as applied both to material and immaterial creation, mankind and the angelic hosts.
46. The **four living creatures** are angelic beings, similar yet very distinct from the descriptive nature of the rest of the angelic host with respect to their appearance.
47. That these **living** beings are intimately connected with **the throne of God**, obviously categorizes them with the elect angels (1Tim.5:21) versus the fallen angels, Satan and his demons.
48. While angels are incorporeal beings (without material body i.e., “spirits”; Psa.104:4 cp.Eph.6:12), they can reveal themselves in bodily form. Gen.18:1-2 cp.19:1ff; Joh.20:12; Heb.13:2
49. As those verses and others denote, their bodily form is always manifested only as a male, human in appearance, and revert back to their spirit form, with the exception of these designated **living creatures** found in the Bible.

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50. This is the primary distinction between the **living creatures** and the remainder of the angelic host in that these beings have been given distinct, permanent, and visible bodies designated for a distinct purpose in serving God.
51. This is further supported by the very term used for these beings “זַׁׁבִּיּוֹן – zoon/living things” that is only used of the animal kingdom elsewhere in the NT. Heb.13:11; 2Pet.2:12; Jud.1:10
52. Just as animals are similar yet distinct in form and appearance from the human race and have a separate distinct purpose in serving mankind, so these **living** beings are distinct from the other angels with a permanent material appearance and in function with God and remainder of elect angels.
53. Further, this is not to imply that these **living creatures** are not rational creations as with the physical animal kingdom that we know.
54. These angels are seen to possess rational thinking (vs.8b, etc.) and volition as noted in their “Amen” proclamations that declares “I believe it true” (cp.Rev.5:14; 19:4).
55. The most common term used for angels, whether ‘מַלְאָכִים - mal-ak” in the OT or “aggel o j – angelos” in the NT, means “messenger” indicating that all of the angelic host function with the purpose to serve, the elect to God, the fallen towards Satan.
56. In addition, the elect angels are seen to fall into one of three primary classes:
  - A. Cherubim, denoting angels chosen by God to guard and cover. Eze.28:14 (pre-fall Lucifer); Gen.3:24; Exo.25:10,18-21 (the two cherubs on top of the Ark of the Covenant.)
  - B. Seraphim, mentioned by name only in Isa.6:2,6, standing above God communicating on His behalf.
  - C. Archangel, denoting ruling angels commissioned to protect specific entities, such as nations and peoples. Jud.1:9 cp. Dan.12:1 and Rev.12:7; 1The.4:16
57. What makes the **four living creatures** distinct in their service to God is the appearance and permanence of their material beings and their **eyes**, both in their relationship to **the throne**.
58. Their positions **around the throne** hark to the 4 standards (identification flags/banners/insignias) of Israel surrounding the tabernacle. Num.2
59. The tabernacle looks to God and the POG (the tabernacle being the residence of God, cp.Exo.40:34-38) and the 4 standards representing that His plan would be fulfilled in Person through the nation Israel.
60. The Person in view is obviously Jesus Christ and a fuller analysis of the 4 standards in this representation of the POG will be discussed following in vs.7.
61. Their **eyes** indicate their service to God in terms of God expressing His omniscience in executing His Sovereign rule throughout time and eternity over His creation (both on earth and in heaven).
62. They are presented as serving God to ensure that His plan for the A/C is carried out in total accord to His purpose.
63. That they are seen as a synchronized stationary unit **around the throne** also makes them distinct in this function compared to the rest of the angelic host that operate on an individual basis.
64. Further insight into these 4 **living creatures** can be further found in the book of Ezekiel. Eze.1; 3:13; 10:15,17,20
65. While many interpreters seek to pass off Ezekiel’s description of the **four living** beings as different from the **four** in Revelation, a close comparison begs to differ that they are one and the same.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

66. Differences that are noted include:
- A. Ezekiel's beings indicate 4 beings each with four faces compared to the singular face per being in Revelation. Eze.1:4
  - B. 4 wings in Ezekiel compared to 6 in Revelation. Eze.1:4
  - C. No bodily torsos are given to our beings as they are in Ezekiel. Eze.1:5b,7,8a
  - D. One face of Ezekiel's being is that of a bull, then a Cherub, rather than a calf. Eze.1:10; 10:14 cp. Rev.4:7
  - E. They are seen to be equipped with transportation wheels and are mobile on the earth in Ezekiel, rather than stationary **around the throne** in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven. Eze.1:15-21
67. However, the similarities overshadow these differences and denote actually the same scenario of **living creatures** in correlation to the **throne of God**:
- A. The faces of both scenarios of the beings are the same with the exceptions noted. Eze.1:10; 10:14 cp. Rev.4:7
  - B. The beings of Ezekiel function as a synchronized unit, equally spaced apart as pictured in Revelation. Eze.1:9a,11b,c (wings touching another on each side; cp.vss.12,14,17,19-21
  - C. There is a clear expanse associated with both accounts. Eze.1:22 cp.Rev.4:6a
  - D. There is that which resembles a throne seen above the expanse in Eze.1:16 cp. vs.28 (the rainbow of God's glory cp. Rev.4:3).
68. These differences can be logically and contextually explained with a closer scrutiny of the accounts by these two authors.
69. John is viewing these beings as they exist in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven in a normal 4 dimensional view, while Ezekiel's vision is as these beings are functioning and operating in time, but viewed as they would be by one from a timeless dimension:
- A. The time differential compared to Revelation is seen with the fact that the beings in Ezekiel are operating on earth and the **throne** room is envision to be above the expanse looking up from earth to the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven. Eze.1:26
  - B. Eze.1:1 states that the visions Ezekiel saw were "of God (~*yhwa*?- Elohim)".
  - C. The most natural reading of the phrase "I saw visions of God" indicates that God manifested Himself in time to Ezekiel as the infinite and highly multi-dimensional Being that He is.
  - D. This is compared to John, who is transported from time into the eternal state ("..Come up here.."; Rev.4:1) with a presentation of the **throne** room as only perceived in a limited 4 dimensional plane.
  - E. In other words, John is viewing God's **throne** room as any human might that was enabled to enter into this eternal realm.
  - F. On the other hand, Ezekiel is given a vision of God expressing Himself not limited by any dimensional planes, though Ezekiel can still only communicate it in a 4 dimensional way.
  - G. This difference between scenarios explains first the disparity in the number of faces ascribed to each **living** being by the separate authors.
  - H. While John can see the beings on a 4 dimensional level (**eyes in front and back and around and within**), their facial appearances are restricted to one per being to emphasize man's limited ability as a physical being to manifest himself in a multi-dimensional sphere.
  - I. Ezekiel's vision is not limited in this way and sees God as He can truly manifest Himself in a 4 fold multi-dimensional way hence, 4 faces per being.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

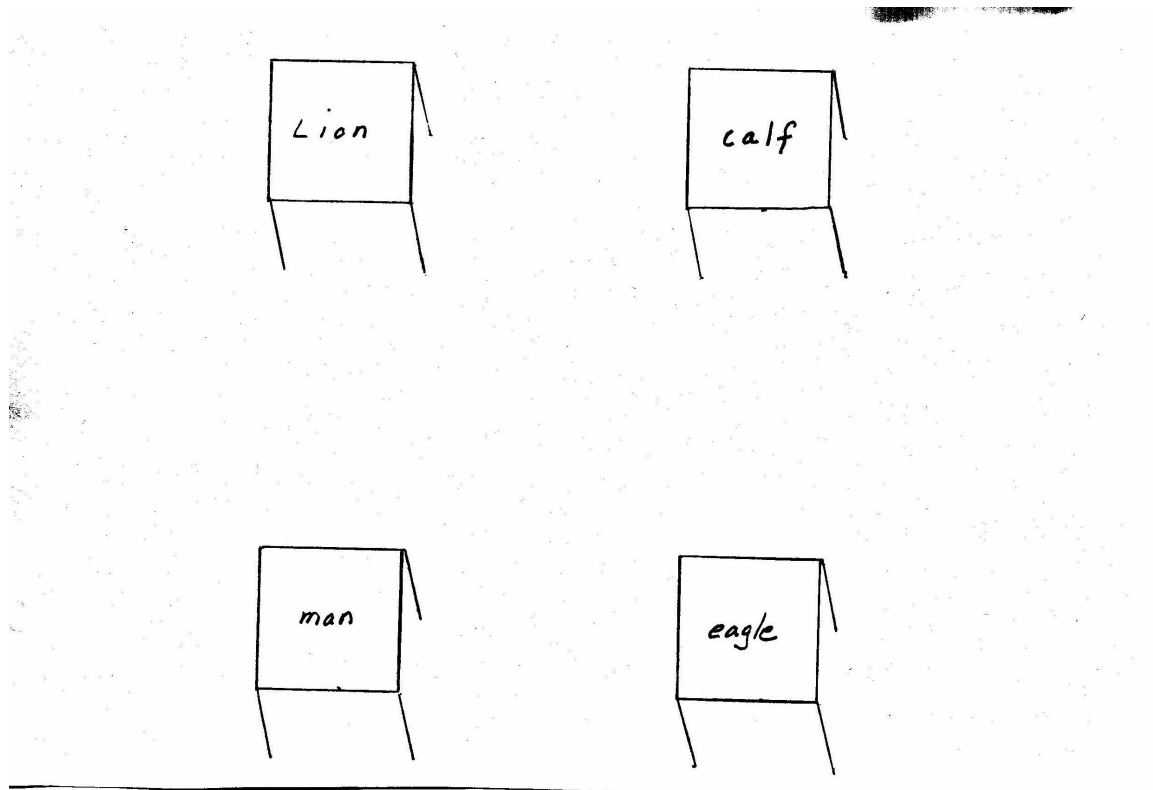
- J. That these beings have the power to change their facial appearances is found in Ezekiel that denotes two primary descriptive accounts of the 4 beings in view per chapters 1 and 10.
- K. He makes clear in Eze.10:20 that both accounts are of the one and same 4 beings.
- L. However, comparing Eze.1:10 with 10:14, we note that the appearance of one of the faces (the bull) has morphed into the face of an angel, specifically a Cherub.
- M. This indicates that these beings have the power to transform their facial appearances accordingly and as so desired by God to coincide with specific doctrine taught or represented.
- N. The purpose for the differing presentations is contextually revealed: Ezekiel looks to God manifesting His Sovereignty of judgment in time, Revelation is simply presenting the standard for that judgment as preordained by God.
- O. John's account looks at the limitation of the finite viewing eternity, Ezekiel's account looks at the infinite expressing itself in time.
- P. John's scenario emphasizes God's Sovereignty as applied to His eternal plan of establishing Christ on the throne and accompanying judgments before its fruition.
- Q. Ezekiel's scenario looks to the literal execution of that Sovereignty on planet earth. (One of the primary prophetic themes of Ezekiel is the establishment of the millennial kingdom and temple. Cp.Eze.34:11-13,22,etc.; Chptrs.40-42ff
- R. While both accounts make reference to the number of **eyes** as part of their manifestation emphasizing God's omniscience (Rev.4:6,8; Eze.1:18; 10:12, each account has a separate emphasis.
- S. John's account again emphasizes the principle of omniscience with respect to God's eternal plan as it exists in heaven, while Ezekiel's emphasis is with respect to the literal mechanics of its expression in time.
- T. This is why the **eyes** are in the wheels attached to the 4 beings in Ezekiel, which wheels further denote their execution of purpose as it relates to time.
- U. The wheels are specifically identified as being the Spirit of God.
- V. That there are four wheels looks to the universality of God's Sovereignty in Person and represents the entirety of the Godhead as manifested in the literal Person of Christ as the vehicle (power/omnipotence) behind the function of these beings.
- W. Further, they are designed to represent the omnipresence of God executing His judgment in time.
- X. This is seen in the travel activity ascribed to the beings in Eze.1:14,17,19-21; 10:9-13,16-17
- Y. God in His execution of judgment in time must exercise His omnipresence of going over all the earth.
- Z. This is seen in that Ezekiel denotes that each being went straight forward as they moved (Eze.1:12), in any of the four directions they faced without turning (Eze.1:17).
- AA. That they are positioned at the 4 compass points of the **throne** in Revelation denotes their travel to the four-corners of the earth emphasized in Ezekiel.
- BB. Yet, these beings are able to maintain their integrity as an individual unit (one whole) as the wheels are further described as functioning in a singular mode ("the spirit of God"; Eze.1:20-21)
- CC. This is designed to represent the reality of Christ's existence as an omnipresent King in His glorified state literally executing His Sovereignty in time.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

- DD. Jesus Christ in hypostatic union is both God and man, yet is one.
- EE. The movements of the 4 beings in Ezekiel represent the expression of Christ exercising His omnipresence as God in the execution of judgment in time, while maintaining the integrity of His humanity in a single Person as the God-man.
- FF. As these beings pass into the time warp of history, they morph (transform) in facial appearance indicating the reality of God's 4 dimensional creation.
- GG. However, while they maintain their 4 dimensional appearance, their movements straightforward, yet in any direction, indicate a multiplication of even that dimensional reality.
- HH. This emphasizes the total expression of God's omnipresence in time.
- II. While I am no physicist and openly admit at being mediocre in the science of math, based on this transformation of 4 faces per 4 individuals able to travel 4 separate directions, while maintaining their physical integrity as a whole, suggests that God's omnipresence revolves around at least a 16 dimensional phenomenon.
- JJ. Before I am written off as a crazy heretic with an uncontrollable imagination, I appeal to the most modern advancement of the science of dimensional reality.
- KK. According to the current "superstring theory" of science under Quantum Theory, it is proposed that there are at least (emphasis on "at least") 10 dimensions as mathematically theorized in a 4<sup>th</sup> dimension hyper-cube.
- LL. The hyper-cube is based on the dimensions of the square as illustrated by the 4 compass points of these 4 **living creatures**.
- MM. John's account provides that denominator. See Fig.1

Fig.1

John's view of the 4 living creatures

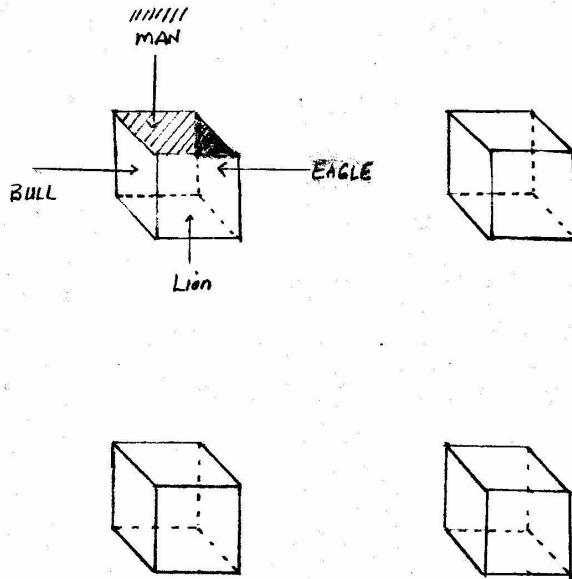


Each with a single face

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

NN. Ezekiel's account multiplies that denominator providing a view of the square giving a 4 dimensional view likened to a cube. See Fig.2

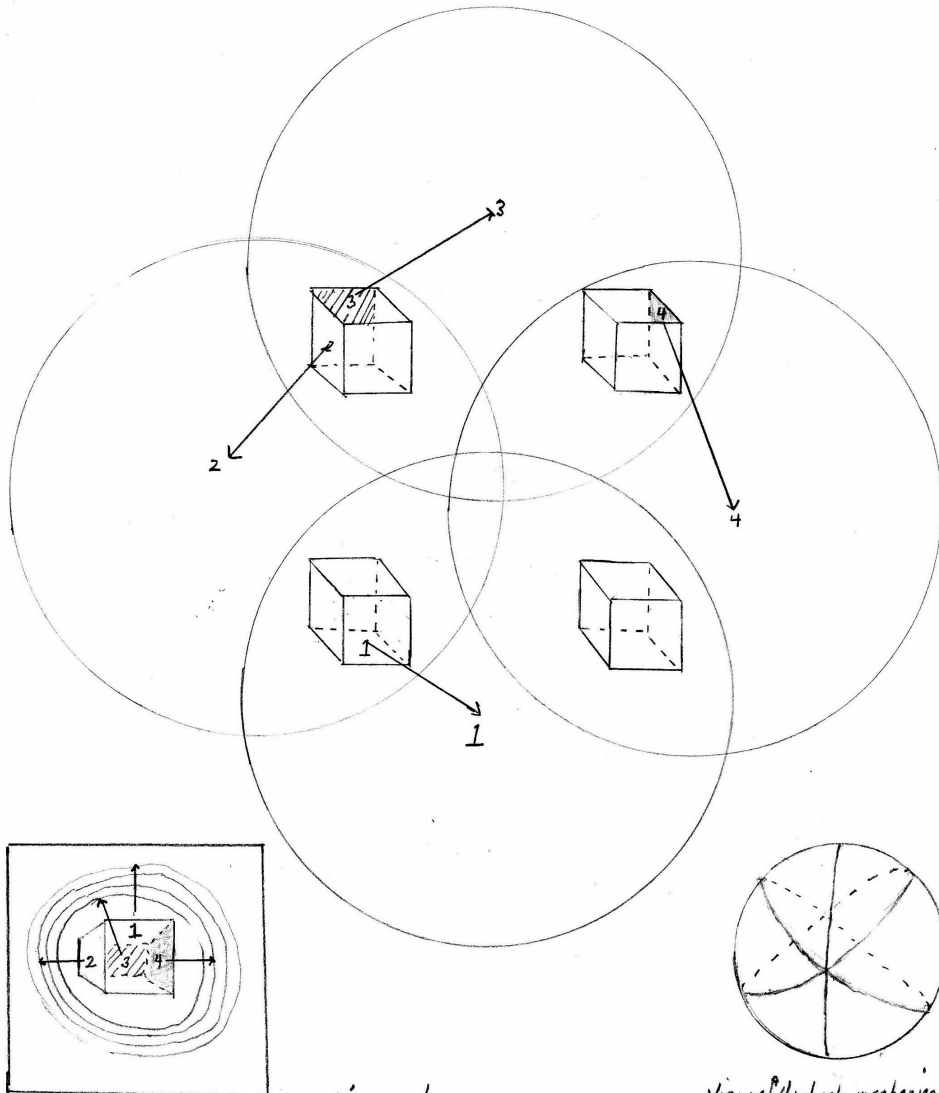
Fig.2  
Ezekiel's view of the 4 living creatures  
Each with 4 faces  
(Ezekiel describing his view with a 4<sup>th</sup> dimensional ability [as John], yet as these creatures really appear in reality (in time) from the perspective of God)



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OO. Further, Ezekiel's account of the wheels further pictures this dimensional phenomenon as the wheels, though separately on each side of each being, are pictured as one wheel within another denoting their perspective in relation to time and space and moving straight forward without turning (Eze.1:16-17). See Fig.3

Fig.3  
Ezekiel's view of the 4 living creatures  
With the 4 wheels beside each and one for each of them



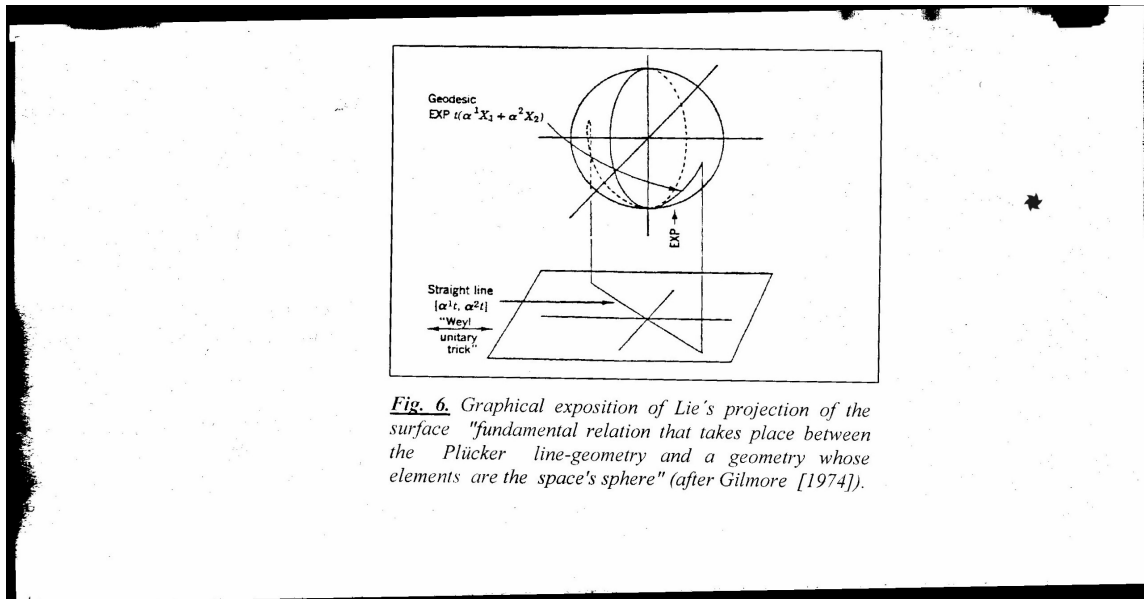
*The view from the perspective of time and space or distance: The wheel of the closest being would look largest; the 2<sup>nd</sup> closest smaller & within; etc.*

*View of 4 wheels mechanically able to move 4 directions without turning as perceived on a one dimensional plane.*

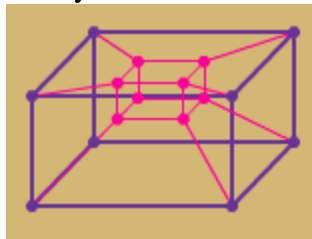


## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

PP. We can now take the picture of John's and Ezekiel's accounts and see the similarities first of the square straight line and circle (wheel) combinations in the science of mathematical dimensions. See Fig.6 per article



QQ. Then the cube presentation of the 4 faces in relation to the view of a hyper-cube drawing denoting the reality of a 4<sup>th</sup> dimension :



RR. Only a highly dimensional reality can explain the phenomenon of Ezekiel's beings able to all move straight forward in all 4 directions without turning, yet retain their material integrity of a single unit following the Spirit of God in any direction. Eze.1:12,17,20-21

SS. Moving on..., the issue of the different number of wings can be more easily explained from the advantage of perception.

TT. That these beings literally have 6 wings as noted by John, it is no stretch of the imagination that from Ezekiel's perception, they could have easily been made to look like they had only 4 by aligning two pairs together giving the visual of one pair.

UU. Again, it must be understood that while both Ezekiel and John are seeing the same beings, both accounts communicate different spiritual truths and concepts regarding their existence and functions.

VV. That Ezekiel only sees 4 wings looks to their role of literally executing God's Sovereignty in time, while John's account of 6 wings emphasizes God's eternal plan for man while seated in His permanent **throne** and a particular function for these beings in that regard.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

- WW. That the beings in Ezekiel are viewed with a bodily torso, this does not mean that John's description are beings without torsos.
- XX. This is substantiated by the fact that John's beings fall down to worship God indicating they possess bodies. Rev.19:4
- YY. Finally, the facial difference of a bull and/or Cherub in Ezekiel and calf in Revelation looks to the maturation of God's expressed Sovereignty as seen in His Son.
- ZZ. As the calf will represent the sacrifice of His Son as that which legally qualifies Him to inherit God's **throne**, the bull in Ezekiel emphasizes that fulfillment literally and physically and the angelic face indicates a solution to the angelic conflict.
70. While it is not our intent to fully exegete Ezekiel's account, it is our intent to document the inseparable ties between these two accounts and note that both are referring to the same angelic **creatures**.
  71. This is important because for one, it identifies the class of angels that the **four living creatures** are, as Ezekiel makes clear they are Cherubim. Eze.10:15-22
  72. Therefore their role of function are as guardians of God's **throne**.
  73. Further, the **four living creatures** represent the standards of God's **throne** as living and literal ensignias/banners representing the Sovereignty of God as fulfilled in Person by Christ, as will be further discussed in vs.7.
  74. They are the "color guards" for the King of the **throne** room commissioned to oversee the fulfillment of God's sovereignty and ensure that perfect execution of it takes place throughout history.
  75. They have been attached to the King of the universe as His personal staff to assist in His execution of policy.
  76. Further, that all angels are inherently messengers, they are commissioned to ensure the exact communication of God's plan as it is applied to the entire angelic host.
  77. That they represent all the elect angels is also noted by their number of 4 that denotes a universal or completed representation as they exist in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven.
  78. That they are **full of eyes** giving them the ability to see God's plan both in time and the eternal state further gives them the ability to coordinate the activities for all of the other angels in their individual assignments as commanded by God.
  79. While God obviously does not need physical vehicles or entities to communicate His plan, the Word of God makes it clear it is by that primary venue that He has chosen to communicate it to His creation.
  80. Therefore, these "color guards" or "sentries" also serve as "communication posts" for God to disperse his directives to the angelic host.
  81. That they are communicators as such in the spiritual world is further implied by the constant association with the elders (communicators in time) as they are further revealed throughout the book of Revelation. Rev.4:9-10; 5:8ff, 11,14; 7:11; 14:3; 19:4
  82. As the standards of God's **throne**, these "color guard" cherubs at attention **around the throne** (cp. their posture Eze.1:7) represent the POG in Divine rule in its most completed form i.e., victory in the Angelic Conflict.
  83. While Revelation will emphasize the earthly seen of God's judgment upon man, it can never be forgotten that the real warfare is spiritual. Eph.6:12
  84. These **living creatures** represent the fact that God's Divine plan for man to rule through Christ is designed to bring a complete resolution to the entire A/C.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

85. This is further emphasized in that during the tribulational period, there will be a separate angelic warfare in which Satan and his army of demons are defeated. Rev.12:7-9
86. This is an earmark event that will shortly thereafter bring a conclusion to the tribulation and establishment of Christ's eternal kingdom. Rev.12:10ff
87. While God's plan of Divine rule is designed to benefit man, it also benefits the entirety of His creation to include the angelic host.
88. The **four living creatures** are designed to symbolically ensure for us that while God is actively on the scene overseeing His plan for man ensuring the institution of His Sovereignty on our behalf, He is also in complete control behind the scenes.
89. They function as an inseparable unit with God's **throne** to indicate the unity of the elect angels in their individual roles of serving God to uphold His Sovereignty over all creation.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### EXEGESIS VERSES 7 – 8:

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:7 kai. to. zw̄bn to. prw̄ton ofnoion leonti kai. to. deuteron zw̄bn ofnoion moscw| kai. to. trīton zw̄bn ecwn to. proswpon wj anqrwpou kai. to. tetarton zw̄bn ofnoion aetw| petomenw|

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:7 **And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf,** kai, (cc) to, prw̄ton prw̄toj (d.a. + restr. attr. ord. adj./nn-s; "first"; as the first in listing order) to, zw̄bn (d.a. + n-nn-s; "living creature") ofnoion ofnoioj (comp. adj./nn-s; "was like/resembling") leonti lewn (n-dm-s; "lion"; used 9x in NT; the king of beasts; specifically identified contextually as Messiah cp. 5:5) kai, (cc) to, deuteron deuterōj (d.a. + ord. adj./nn-s; "the second") zw̄bn (n-nn-s; "living creature") ofnoion ofnoioj (a--nn-s; "like") moscw| moscoj (n-dm-s; lit. a tender shoot or sprout/offspring; of the animal world "a young calf/ox/bull"; used 6x; ceremonially used to indicate sacrifice; cp. Heb.9:12,19) **and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.** kai, (cc) to, trīton trītoj (d.a. + ord. adj./nn-s; "the third") zw̄bn (n-nn-s) ecwn ecw (circ. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "while having") to, proswpon (d.a. + n-an-s; "the face/countenance/facial appearance") wj (comp. conj.; "like that/in the same manner as") anqrwpou anqrwpoj (n-gm-s; "a human man") kai, (cc) to, tetarton tetartoj (d.a. + ord. adj./nn-s; "the fourth") zw̄bn (n-nn-s) ofnoioj (a--nn-s; "was like") petomenw| petomai (adj. ptc./p/d/dm-s; "a flying") aetw| aetoj (n-dm-s; "eagle/carrion bird or vulture"; used 5x)

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:8 kai. ta. tessara zw̄ba( ēh kaql ēh autwh ecwn ana. pterugaj ek( kuklogen kai. eswqen gemousin ofqalmwh( kai. anapausin ouk ecousin hmeraj kai. nuktoj legontej( {Agioj agioj agioj kurioj ō qeoj ō pantokratwr( ō h̄n kai. ō wh kai. ō ercomenoj|

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:8 **And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within;** kai, (cc) ta. to, tessara tessarej (d.a. + card. adj./nn-p; "the four") zw̄ba( zw̄bn (n-nn-p; "living creatures") ēh eij + kaql kata, + ēh eij (card. adj./an-s; "one" + pa; "according to" + card. adj./an-s; "one"; "one by one/each one") autwh autoj (npgn3p; "of them") ecwn ecw (circ. ptc./p/a/nm-s; "while having") ana, (ab; when used with numbers denotes distribution; "apiece"; not specifically translated in the NAS) ek( (card. adj./af-p; "six") pterugaj pterux (n-af-p; "wings"; used 5x) gemousin gemw (vipa--3p; "are filled with") ofqalmwh( ofqalmoj (n-

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

*gm-p*; "eyes") *kukloqen* (*ab*; "around"; *on the outside cp.'d to following adverb esothern*)  
*kai*, (*cc*) *eswqen* (*ab*; "within") **and day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come."** *kai*, (*cc*) *hmeraj hmera* (*n-gf-s*; "day") *kai*, (*cc*) *nuktoj nux* (*n-gf-s*; "night")  
*anapausin anapausij* (*n-af-s*; "intermission/cessation/resting" +) *ouk ouw* (*neg.* +)  
*ecousin ecw* (*vipa--3p*; "the do not have"; hence, they do not cease") *legontej( legw*  
(*circ. ptc./p/a/nm-p*; "while saying") {*Agioj* (*a--nm-s*) *agjioj* (*a--nm-s*) *agjioj* (*a--nm-s*:  
"Holy, holy, holy"; a proclamation of reverence or veneration/exalting) *kurjioj* (*n-nm-s*)  
*o qeoj* (*d.a.* + *n-nm-s*; "the God") *o pantokratwr*( (*d.a.* + *n-nm-s*; "Ruler over  
all/Almighty/All powerful One/Omnipotent One"; same as 1:8) *o hñ eimi*, (*viIPFa--3s*;  
"the one who was" ) *kai*, (*cc*) *o wh eimi*, (*d.a.* + *adj. ptc./p/a/nm-s*; "the One continually  
being/who is") *kai*, (*cc*) *o ercomenojā ercomai* (*d.a.* + *adj. ptc./p/d/nm-s*; "who is in the  
continual process of coming" )

### ANALYSIS VERSES 7- 8:

1. Having established in vs.6 that these **four living creatures** are Cherubim and one and the same as the Ezekiel accounts, we now focus of their representation in person.
2. As the "color guards" of God's throne, they collectively represent His Sovereignty as living standards highlighting **four** distinct characteristics attributed to His Person.
3. While it is not stated about the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> beings, the 3<sup>rd</sup> that **had a face like that of a man** indicates that the similarity is to be understood to extend only to the **face**.
4. While we read these things literally, and the literal meaning conveys certain concepts, it is important to recognize that the infinite God is providing revelation to finite creatures that lack true capacity or ability to grasp His essence and character.
5. Therefore, He provides this through pictures, employing colors to express certain truths and things with which we are readily familiar to convey doctrine with respect to His character.
6. These **four living creatures** are constantly before the throne as a means of revealing certain aspects of the invisible God so His visible creatures can comprehend and understand Him.
7. That there are 4 beings, each pictured at a compass point around the throne, harks to what was prefigured in the tabernacle and the tribes that were placed around it:
  - A. The tabernacle represented the dwelling place of God.
  - B. It was surrounded on all sides the by 12 tribes of Israel: Judah centered to the East, Dan centered to the North, Rueben centered to the South and Ephraim centered to the West. Num.2:3,10,18,25
  - C. The standard of Judah was the **lion**, Dan an **eagle**, Reuben being the tribe of the firstborn was symbolized by a man's **face** and Ephraim that of a **calf**.
8. That the tabernacle was always in the center of the tribes taught that God would manifest Himself through the nation Israel.

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

9. The 4 beings as the standards of God's throne now reflect the reality of that manifestation as fulfilled in the Person of Christ.
10. All 4 cherubs are described using the same comparative adjective "ὁμοιοι – homoios/**like**" that means something as the same nature or kind, something that resembles something else.
11. He is not saying that these 4 beings had the actual head of a **lion, calf, man and eagle**; he is making a comparison denoting similarity of facial features of each to express the reality of God with earthly **creatures** with which we are familiar.
12. He tells us, "**And the first creature was like a lion**", which is readily recognized in almost all cultures as the king of the beasts.
13. This figure is used to denote that God and His Son are royalty of the highest degree, emphasizing God's sovereignty.
14. This is emphasized very strongly in the book of Matthew, whose argument in that gospel is that Jesus is the **Lion** of the tribe of Judah, the expected King of the Jews.
15. This is one reason that Matthew traces the genealogy of Christ back to King David, demonstrating that He has the legal right to the throne of Israel and is the promised King that will fulfill the particulars of the David Covenant. Mat.1:1; 2Sam.7:16
16. **The second creature like a calf** looks to the chief of animals that man has domesticated for his personal use.
17. This word is used only 5 other times in the NT and in all cases denote a ceremonial sacrifice. Luk.15:23,27,30; Heb.9:12,19
18. This representation is designed to convey the spiritual truth that God is a servant to mankind in every way and His physical expression of such is realized in His Son. Isa.42:1; 52:13; 53:11
19. The entire incarnation was a reflection of the nature of God's Son, as He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant. Phi.2:6-7
20. He manifested this nature of a true servant during the course of His life, doing anything and everything He could for the benefit of those around Him. Mar.10:45
21. He demonstrated the highest form of service for humanity when He offered up His own life as a ransom for all. 1Tim.2:6
22. This nature of the love that God and His Son have for humanity is very clearly seen in the NT by the repeated use of the verb "δίδωμι/didomi – give". Joh.3:16; 4:10; 6:32; Rom.8:32
23. This is the emphasis of the Gospel of Mark that provides no genealogy or personal information about Him, since that would not be fitting to delineate the history of a slave.
24. **The third creature like that of a man** is designed to put people on notice that God's plan will ultimately be accomplished via true humanity. Psa.8:4ff
25. This was clearly one of Jesus' favorite designations for Himself as evidenced by the fact that the phrase "Son of man", is used by Him some 50x in the gospels.
26. This aspect of His character emphasizes the reality that God would become flesh (Joh.1:14) and take all the limitations of humanity upon Himself in order to redeem the fallen race. Heb.2:14-18
27. This presents a picture of God incarnate, the visible Savior of the world whose true humanity is emphasized in the Gospel of Luke, who traces Jesus genealogy back to the original man Adam. Luk.3:23ff
28. **The fourth and final creature like a flying eagle** indicates maximum freedom (Oba.1:4), keen sight (omniscience), quick action (Jer.48:40), protectiveness

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

- (Deu.32:11) and whose coming is often a biblical figure for judgment (Deu.28:49; Job 9:26).
29. This is a fitting figure to represent the One on the throne as Eternal God and that His Son shares equally in His Deity.
  30. The emphasis of the Gospel of John is that Jesus was God as God and that His Person is represented by qualities similar to those of the **eagle**:
    - A. That He is Deity possessing eternal life providing maximum freedom from death. Joh.1:1-4,10
    - B. He possessed omniscience. Joh.2:24; 4:18; 5:42; 6:64; 13:1
    - C. He was capable of quick and incisive judgments. Joh.1:47; 2:4; 4:48
    - D. He was very protective of His own. Joh.13:1; 17:12; 18:9
    - E. His 1<sup>st</sup> Advent was a judgment on negative volition. Joh.3:18-21
    - F. It further points to the fact that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent is also for the purpose of judgment. Psa.96:13; Act.17:31
  31. These **four living creatures** then form a visible composite that is designed to give us a visual representation of the invisible qualities possessed by the Father and manifested in the Son.
  32. In vs.8a, John then informs us that **each one of them** were presently **having six wings** and that they were **full of eyes around and within**.
  33. The **wings** indicate a mode of travel with speed and symbolize God's omnipresence, an invisible quality attributed to God in Ezekiel's account.
  34. That there are 6 **wings** indicates that it is on behalf of mankind that God expresses His omnipresence (God created man on the 6<sup>th</sup> day).
  35. Further it indicates that the manifestation of His omnipresence will be in the glorified Christ visible in His humanity.
  36. As the Sovereign ruler over mankind, Christ is unique in that He can be everywhere at once to ensure the security and safety of His citizens and kingdom.
  37. This is in contrast to only 4 **wings** in Ezekiel that indicates the exercise of His omnipresence in time over the world.
  38. Again, the **eyes** indicates God's omniscience and now they are seen to include vision of the eternal and unseen internal realm His creation.
  39. There is nothing that God does not know, "*declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done*". Isa.46:10
  40. In so doing, God is always covering all the bases to include every aspect of the A/C, seen and unseen.
  41. Further, it emphasizes His mode of righteous rule since He knows everything about every subject in His kingdom.
  42. That John can see **eyes within/inside** these angelic beings indicates their manifestation is in the form of what we might envision as a hologram.
  43. This again indicates the dimensional complexity of these **creatures** that exist in a spiritual realm but manifested in a material state.
  44. In the final part of vs.8, John introduces us to part of the heavenly activity these 4 beings engage in, "**and day and night they do not cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come"**".
  45. On the surface it sounds as if these beings are engaged in their worship without ceasing, which is not the case.
  46. The phrase "**day and night**" is to be classified as a genitive of time that has the nuance of "within which, or during which".

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47. A similar construction is used in 1The.2:9, with these two genitives being followed by a participle and the stress is not on duration of activity, but on the time in which Paul worked.
48. The same is true here emphasizing that at any time in the **day** or **night** they may engage in this activity.
49. Most interpreters recognize the Trinitarian aspect of their praise, ascribing to each member of the Godhead that quality of holiness.
50. The term “**holy**” focuses on that which is set apart, that which is consecrated, that which is separate from defilement or sin.
51. God will not compromise; and these **four** angels are constantly speaking of His total separation from that which does not conform to His absolute righteousness.
52. The title “**the Lord God, the Almighty**” is equivalent to the Hebrew phrase, “**the Lord** of the armies/hosts” that is used in Isaiah 6:3.
53. In fact, the LXX often translates “Elohiym of the armies” by the same Greek term “pantokratwr/pantokrator – **Almighty**”. 2Sam.5:10; et al
54. The angels then close their doxology (a statement that is designed to express praise to God) with the same expression we saw in Rev.1:4, with a slight variation in word order:
  - A. **Who was** indicates His continuous existence in eternity past.
  - B. **Who is** indicates His continual existence at the present moment.
  - C. **Who is to come** indicates His arrival to establish His kingdom on planet earth and beyond.
55. The change of word order here looks at the manifestation of God’s Sovereignty in relation to time.
56. From eternity into the dimension of time God is manifested in Person and will once again be physically revealed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent as the Sovereign Jesus Christ.
57. What we have to this point in chapter 4 is a vision of God’s throne of judgment, rumbling like a volcano about to explode, ready to unleash the just and righteous retribution on those having rejected His plan.
58. The visuals that John has seen are to be taken as literal representation of what he observed, but further designed to provide a greater revelation of Him who sits on the throne:
  - A. The jasper – His glory of righteousness.
  - B. The sardius – His sacrifice.
  - C. The emerald – His resurrection life.
  - D. The rainbow – His faithfulness to His promises/covenants.
  - E. The throne – His Sovereignty.
  - F. The elders – the glorified Church as the second nation sharing in His reign.
  - G. The seven lamps – the Person of the Holy Spirit.
  - H. The sea of glass – a tribute to the Word of God with respect to experiential righteousness.
  - I. The **four living creatures** in unit – the manifestation of God in the Person of Christ.
  - J. The 1<sup>st</sup> angel – Christ is king/Sovereign.
  - K. The 2<sup>nd</sup> – His service or work on behalf of mankind.
  - L. The 3<sup>rd</sup> – His true humanity and all that means.
  - M. The 4<sup>th</sup> – His absolute equality with the Father, Christ is God and produces maximum freedom in the A/C.



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- N. Their **eyes** – His omniscience.
- O. The **wings** – His omnipresence.
- P. The ascription of holiness – His complete doctrine of separation
- Q. The **Almighty** – His omnipotence.

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### EXEGESIS VERSES 9 – 11:

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:9 kai. oʽtan dwsousin ta. zwʽa doxan kai. timhn kai. eucaristian twʽ kaqhmenwʽ epi. twʽ qronwʽ twʽ zwhti eij touj aiwhaj twh aiwnwn(

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:9 **And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks** kai, (cc) oʽtan (temp. conj.; "whenever/at the time that"; only here used with a future indicative verb following; could be translated, "as certain as when") ta. to, zwʽa zwʽn (d.a. + n-nn-p; "the living creatures") dwsousin didwmi (vifa--3p; "will give") doxan doxa (n-af-s; "glory/praise") kai, (cc) timhn timh, (n-af-s; "honor"; placing value upon something or someone) kai, (cc) eucaristian eucaristia (n-af-s; "thanks") **to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever,** twʽ oʽ kaqhmenwʽ kaqhmai (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/d/dm-s; "to the One sitting") epi, (pd; "upon/on") twʽ oʽ qronwʽ qronoj (d.a. + n-dm-s) twʽ oʽ zwhti zaw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/dm-s; "to the One living") eij (pa+) touj oʽ aiwhaj aiwn (d.a. + n-am-p+) twh oʽ aiwnwn( aiwn (d.a. + n-gm-p; lit. "into the ages of the ages"; hence; "forever and ever")

<sup>GNT</sup> Revelation 4:10 pesouhtai oi` eikosi tessarej presbuteroi enwpion tou/kaqhmenou epi. tou/ qronou kai. proskunhsousin twʽ zwhti eij touj aiwhaj twh aiwnwn kai. balousin touj stefanouj autwh enwpion tou/qronou legontej(

<sup>NAS</sup> Revelation 4:10 **the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne,** oi` oʽ (dnmp +) eikosi (card. adj./nm-p; "twenty") tessarej (card. adj./nm-p; "four") presbuteroi presbuteroj (ap-nm-p; "elders") pesouhtai piptw (vifd--3p; "will bow down to the floor") enwpion (pg; "before") tou/o kaqhmenou kaqhmai (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/d/gm-s; "the One sitting"; denoting the object of worship) epi, (pg) tou/o qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s) **and will worship Him who lives forever and ever,** kai, (cc) proskunhsousin proskunew (vifa--3p; "will worship/prostrate themselves in reverence/show obeisance"; used 64x) twʽ oʽ zwhti zaw (d.a. + subs. ptc./p/a/dm-s; "to Him who lives") eij (pa +) touj oʽ aiwhaj aiwn (d.a. + n-am-p +) twh oʽ aiwnwn aiwn (d.a. + n-gm-p; "forever and ever") **and will cast their (corrected) wreaths before the throne, saying,** kai, (cc) balousin bal lw (vifa--3p; "will cast down/throw down") autwh autoj (pgm3p; ref. 24 elders) touj oʽ stefanouj stefanoj (d.a. + n-am-p; "wreaths") enwpion (pg; "before") tou/o qronou qronoj (d.a. + n-gm-s) legontej( legw (circ. ptc./p/a/nm-p; "while saying")

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**GNT** Revelation 4:11 :Axioj eiξ ō kurioj kai. ō qeoj hmwh( labeiñ thn doxan kai. thn timhn kai. thn dunamin( ołti su. ektisaj ta. panta kai. dia. to. qełhma, sou hñan kai. ektisqhsan

**NAS** Revelation 4:11 **"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; :Axioj (a--nm-s; "Worthy/Entitled to") eiξ eimi, (vipa--2s; "You keep on being/are You") hmwh( egw, (npg-1p; ref. 24 elders) ō kurioj (d.a. + n-vm-s; "Lord"; vocative = case of address) kai, (cc) ō qeoj (d.a. + n-vm-s) labeiñ lambanw (inf. of object/aa; "to receive"; Epexegetic; as the object of "keeps on being" worthy of receiving upon Himself) thn h̄ doxan doxa (d.a. + n-af-s; "glory") kai, (cc) thn h̄ timhn timh, (d.a. + n-af-s; "honor") kai, (cc) thn h̄ dunamin( dunamij (d.a. + n-af-s; "power") for You did create all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." ołti (causal conj.; "because/for") su, (npn-2s; "ref. Lord and God) ektisaj ktizw (viaa--2s; "created/brought about") ta. to, panta paj (d.a. + ap-an-p; "the all things/everything") kai, (cc) dia, (pa; "because of") sou su, (npg-2s) to, qełhma (d.a. + n-an-s; "will/volition"; emphasizes His directive will as Sovereignty) hñan eimi, (viIPFa--3p; "they were existing") kai, (cc) ektisqhsan ktizw (viap--3p; "have been created")**

### ANALYSIS VERSES 9 – 11:

1. Verse 9 is introduced by an indefinite temporal clause, and should be translated, **"And whenever the living creatures give.."**.
2. This is the only time in the NT when the subordinate conjunction "ołtan/ hotan – whenever" is used with a future indicative.
3. It is normally used with the aorist subjunctive, but that construction emphasizes a probable action; this action is not probable, it is certain to occur.
4. This grammatical form is also designed to convey the nuance of repetition rather than unbroken, continual action.
5. This construction does not mean, as some interpreters have wrongly stated, that this action will only occur one time
6. This makes explicit that they are not constantly praising God's holiness, as we stated in vs.8; they simply engage in this action day or night and apparently according to their own choice.
7. If they were simply creatures that did this apart from volition, they would be nothing more than robots engaging in mindless, programmed activity.
8. It should be understood that all angels function according to choices they make of their own free **will**, and are not coerced in any fashion.
9. Again, the fact that there are four of them is designed to express the relationship between the earth, the creation populated with men, and God.

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10. When these four living creatures make their statement about the holiness of God, it is referred to in vs. 9 as giving, “**glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne**”.
11. The first term *doxa/doxa* - glory is used in a number of ways in the Word of God, but here it has the nuance of a good opinion concerning someone and the actions that result from that estimation.
12. The **glory of God** refers to the sum total of His attributes, the qualities that He possesses that make Him superior to all created things.
13. When the creatures He **created** by grace recognize the exalted nature of His person and give verbal expression to any of His attributes, **God** is glorified.
14. When the four living creatures articulate the truth that God is exalted and separate from all that is less than Himself, this magnifies **Him** in the sight of those that hear.
15. When they reflect on the eternity of His person, “**to Him who lives forever and ever**”, it is designed to remind all that read this that God’s judgments are just.
16. This is based on His knowledge of human history, and His being privy to every detail related to angels and mankind.
17. The second verb **honor** relates to the value that one assigns to a thing, or the worth that one ascribes to a person.
18. God receives honor from those that recognize His exalted person and acknowledges the qualities that He possesses.
19. The last term **thanks** is a compound of “*eu/eu* – good” and “*carij/charis* – grace/charm” that denotes that we exercise good grace by offering thanks to **Him who sits on the throne**.
20. The final two clauses of “sitting **on the throne**” and “living **forever**” are designed to emphasize that **God** is the Sovereign, Eternally ruling King of the universe and is worthy of our total allegiance.
21. Giving Him **glory and honor and thanks** should occupy a large part of our prayer life and is one way that we demonstrate our occupation with **God** and His plan.
22. Too often, we are focused on the trivialities of life, the things that don’t go our way, the tests we face, the undeserved suffering, and many other things that distract us from thinking about the glories of **Him who sits on the throne**.
23. These four living creatures demonstrate a single-minded devotion and loyalty to God that ought to cause us to focus more on **Him** and less on ourselves.
24. Every time that the four living creatures begin their praise of God, John then informs us that “**the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne**”.
25. While the future form of the verb “*piptw/pipto* – fall” is deponent, the middle force (performing and receiving the action) of it is evident as **the elders** willingly prostrate themselves **before God**.
26. Again, throughout these three verses, the future indicative is consistently used to show the absolute certainty of this all coming to pass.
27. The action of falling **down before the throne** is designed to convey the overt activity of **worship** by prostrating oneself and placing the face to the ground.
28. This is certainly designed to convey the absolute humility that Church Age believers will have when they are in the presence of **God**, who not only **created** them, but also redeemed them.
29. Again, the subject of God’s eternity is mentioned as the 24 **elders** “**will worship Him who lives forever and ever and cast their wreaths before the throne**”, acknowledging Him as the supreme ruler of the universe.

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30. This activity is designed to teach that those who complete their course and gain the ultimate Ph<sub>3</sub> prize and authority in that realm will willingly return their **glory** back to the One that is deserving of all praise.
31. Obviously, not all Church Age believers will be represented in this ceremony, since some will not have the special blessings of Heaven and will not receive their crowns. Col. 2:18; Rev. 2:10, 3:11
32. As the 24 **elders** representatively cast their crowns at the foot of the throne on behalf all that received the crown, they verbally express their appreciation to the One that makes all things possible.
33. Their doxology (proclamation of praise and thanksgiving) then places upon **God** the very glory that He manifests, “**Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power**”.
34. They speak of **our Lord and our God** as being worthy to receive all the **glory, honor, and power** that comes to Him as the sovereign creator of all things.
35. That the Father is referred to as both **Lord and God**, yet looked to in the singular as seen by the singular pronoun “**You and Your**” that follows indicates the understanding by the **elders** of His manifestation in the Person of Christ.
36. This is designed to express the reality that the Father, as the designer of **all things**, visible and invisible, has the legal right to rule over the creation for which He is responsible.
37. Further, it indicates His inherent right to execute that rule through the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Godhead, Jesus Christ.
38. The Greek term “kurioj/kurios – **lord**” emphasizes one that has the legal right, power, and authority over his own property.
39. This is the sense and force of the remainder of vs.11, “**for You did create all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created**”.
40. These 24 **elders** willingly acknowledge the fact that they are God’s property, they belong to Him by virtue of the redeeming work of His Son. Eph. 1:7; Tit. 2:14
41. They describe their **Lord and God** with the Greek adjective axioj/axios that means that which is comparable, equivalent, or **worthy**.
42. What He is **worthy to receive** is described by the expegetical (to fully explain **God** with **God**) infinitive ‘lambano/lambano – **receive**”.
43. The two terms **glory and honor** both have the definite article and quite naturally refer to the **glory and honor** that was given by the four **living creatures** in vs.9.
44. The last term in vs.9 “**thanks**” is now replaced with the Greek term ‘dunamij – dunamis”, which focuses on the ability or capability to do something.
45. The ancient Greeks tended to think of this term as an absolute cosmic principle, with the only thing behind it being the mind.
46. While some of the Greek philosophers taught that the world is to be explained in terms of force, the Stoics actually equate **God** with this invisible, self-moving force that moves the world.
47. While their definitions led to a pantheistic force, it is clear here in Revelation that we are not dealing with some impersonal force, but an omnipotent, personal **God**.
48. The OT understanding of **God** did not so much focus on the **power** He possessed, but the **will** that this **power** must execute and serve.
49. That is quite evident in our verse as the **power** ascribed to **God** is viewed as that which executed the Divine **will**, as seen in the phrase **because of Your will**.

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50. God's power in original creation is emphasized by the causal clause that follows about the fact that God **created all things**.
51. The creation view is original creation, in which **God** called into being **things** that did not exist, beginning with the angels. Rom.4:17; Heb.11:3
52. The order of original creation is as follows:
  - a. Angels. Job 38:4-7
  - b. Universe. Job 38:4-7
  - c. Man. Gen.1:27
53. The Greek is emphatic when it employs the pronoun "Su/su – **you**", and should be translated "**You Yourself created the all things**".
54. This is **all** in contrast to the god of Aristotle, who was merely a docile machine that cannot choose to act or react, could not and cannot choose to become Creator, and truly lacks the power, understanding, awareness, and freedom to do what is ascribed to **Him** here.
55. It is also in contrast with the modern evolutionary cosmogonists (those that occupy themselves with explaining how the cosmos came to be), who maintain that the universe evolved itself out of nothing, which contradicts the law of cause-and-effect, the principle of conservation of mass/energy, the law of increasing entropy (measure of the unavailable energy in a closed system), and the very nature of reason itself.
56. This concept is referred to as creating *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), and emphasizes a pre-existent Creator with an intelligent plan and design.
57. This too is emphasized by the prepositional phrase **because of Your will**, which denotes God's purpose, desire, or intention.
58. Everything that exists or has ever existed owes its very existence to the purpose of **God**, whose Son was the actual agent of all creation. Col.1:16-20
59. The final phrase has generated some difficulty since many interpreters view the order of the expression "**they were existing**" and "**they were created**" as being backwards both logically and chronologically.
60. If one simply understands that the **elders** are not referring to their existence first as much as to their plan or design, which is followed by their actual creation, the difficulty disappears.
61. In fact, it is God's eternal plan that this chapter has focused upon with details of its execution to follow.
62. In other words, the plan for the physical creation that began with the angels was part of God's eternal purpose, and is executed by God the Son at the appropriate time.
63. The physical creation is a tribute and witness to the Divine essence as it manifests God's existence and declares His **glory**. Ps.19:1-4; Rom.1:20
64. While **God** has patiently endured a creation that is in revolt against His **will** and purpose, He is about to use His mighty ability to subject the **all things** to Himself; that will begin with the events that occur in chapter 5.
65. *Review Doctrine of Angels.*