

## Revelation, Part 7 — After These Things

In the previous chapters, John was given messages for the church. In each of the messages, the Lord encouraged the church to hold fast, persevere, repent, and return. Immediately after speaking to the churches, John's focus was turned from the things that are toward the things that will soon happen.

**Revelation 4:1 NKJV** After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

*"After these things" specifically addresses what the Lord Jesus had been saying to the church.*

The messages addressed seven churches in Asia, all of the churches that were in existence at John's time, and the all of churches throughout the church age. This is from the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2 until the catching away of the church or rapture of the church. The messages are both specific and diverse. Some needed to renew their first love for the Lord and for one another. Some have been under great attack from Satan and the Lord does not want them to be afraid of what Satan may do. The church needs to stay true to the Word of God, sound doctrine and moral living. The Lord told the church to deal with falsehoods and those who practice sexual immorality. He wanted them to get back to the power of the Spirit and salvation and do their first works. The Lord gave them an open door, so they could hold true to the Lord. Jesus wants His church to be fire-hot in their relationship with Him. At the conclusion of the messages, the Lord promised those who overcome will sit with Him on His throne.

*"I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven."*

After focusing on the church, Jesus opened heaven for John to see the things that will happen after the church. It is important to know that access and observation into heaven is only given by divine invitation. This main section of the Revelation reveals future events. The world is about to experience dramatic changes. This transition is not just a change in focus, it is a revelation of what is going to happen next.

*And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." After this verse, the church is not mentioned again on earth.*

Look at the word that was spoken: *"Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."* Many believe the sound of the trumpet and the message to *"Come up here,"* represents the catching away (rapture) of the church. Whether this is the case or not, the fact remains that the church is not seen on earth again until the millennial kingdom is set up. The purpose for

“*come up here*” is the revelation of things that must take place.

**Revelation 4:2 NKJV** Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

**In the Spirit, John was enabled to “*come up*” and “*see*.”**

Upon entrance into heaven, “*Behold, a throne set in heaven and One sat on the throne.*” John’s vision was captivated by the throne and by God sitting on the throne. God is the supreme authority over all things. From the beginning until the culmination of all things, the Lord God Omnipotent rules and reigns and all things are under His supreme control.

**Revelation 4:3 NKJV** And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

The majesty and glory of God is indescribable and beyond the likeness of any human form or shape. God and His glory are described as unapproachable light, precious gems, and in the brilliance of His splendor, ( Psalms 104:2; 1 Timothy 6:16). His appearance or countenance was like a jasper and the fiery red sardius stone. Some think this is a representation of the appearance of the radiance from the throne. John said, “*He who sat there was like a jasper and sardius stone in appearance.*”

**Jasper is described in Revelation 21:11.**

Revelation 21:11 says, “*The New Jerusalem has the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.*”

**The sardius stone has the appearance of fire.**

This description appears to be referring to the radiance or effulgence of the glory that emanates from and surrounds God.

**Ezekiel had a similar experience and spoke of what he saw.**

**Ezekiel 1:27-28 NKJV** Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

The glory of God was like a rainbow around the throne in appearance like an emerald. When we combine these two, we get a clearer image of the appearance of the glory of God.

**Revelation 4:4 NKJV** Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the

thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

### Who are the twenty-four elders?

The white robes and crowns of victory indicate they are the redeemed. Angels are never represented with thrones or crowns. Here and in Revelation 11:16, the twenty-four elders fall on their faces and worship God. Twenty-four may represent the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 Apostles of the Lamb. If that is the case, the twenty-four represent the whole body of believers Old and New Testament. Their white robes indicates they have been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. Crowns and white robes are promised to the faithful. In Revelation 2:10, they were promised a crown of life. In Revelation 3:4, they shall walk with Him in white for they are worthy.

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

Their appearance and position indicate the redeemed of the Lord.

**Revelation 4:10-11 NKJV** the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

**Revelation 5:8 NKJV** Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

### Listen to the new song that they sing.

**Revelation 5:9-11 NKJV** And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

From this description we know that the twenty-four elders represent the hosts of the redeemed.

They are lifting up a praise for they are redeemed by the blood of Christ.

**Revelation 5:12 NKJV** saying with a loud voice: "*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!*"

**Revelation 4:5 NKJV** And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

*From the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices.*

This is a reminder of the scene at Mount Sinai when God came down and the mountain was covered with a dense cloud and there was fire and lightning. John was seeing a manifestation of the awesome and wonderful power of God. Thunder is mentioned eight times in Revelation (4:5; 6:1; 8:5; 11:19; 14:2; 16:18; 19:6). Often when lightnings, thunderings, and voices are seen and heard, it represents God's power and presence. The lightnings, thunderings, and voices are a call to attention before God. The awesome and powerful God is present. In the Exodus, when God came down and revealed His glory to Israel, the people experienced similar events and were terrified at the sound and glory of God.

*Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

The fullness of the Holy Spirit is before the throne of God.

*Everything is prepared for the revelation of Christ as the Lamb that has been slain.*

The atmosphere of heaven is charged with the glory and majesty of God.

**Revelation 4:6 NKJV** Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

*The sea of glass, like crystal probably represents the holiness of God.*

In the Tabernacle there was a brass laver for the washing and cleansing of the priests. When Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel saw the God of Israel, "*Under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity,*" (Exodus 24:9-10).

*The sea of glass most definitely represents holiness and purity before God.*

Nothing around and about the throne of God is common, but precious, holy and pure. The glassy sea reflects the glory that surrounds and proceeds from the throne of God. It also reveals how far God is away from the impurities of a sinful world. He dwells in unapproachable light.

*And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.*

This is the first of many presentations of God's holy angels.