

## Be Encouraged - God Is On His Throne & Is In Control

*"the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne..."* Revelation 4:10 NLT

- Do you ever feel like life & its problems are out of control?

Chapters 4-5 give us the most detailed picture of heaven in the Bible (Heaven is also described in Isaiah 6:1-8 and Job 1-2). God gave this glimpse of heaven to **encourage His children** suffering from the evil of the world.

The book of Revelation was written in AD 95 during the reign of the Roman emperor Titus Flavius Domitian (də'mi sh ən). Emperor Domitian was a cold-blooded murderer. He demanded "emperor worship" which required acknowledging him as "Lord and God." The refusal of the Jews and Christians to worship him resulted in persecution and execution.

Chapters 4-5 show us God on His throne and He is in control. He is reigning and redeeming. The time is coming in the future when He will stop evil, bring judgment, and redeem the world from the curse of sin.

Bible teacher, Warren Wiersbe writes:

**"The keyword in this chapter is *throne*; it is used fourteen times. In fact, this is a keyword in the entire book, appearing forty-six times. No matter what may happen on earth, God is on His throne and is in complete control... What an encouragement that would be to the suffering saints of John's day and of every age in history."** (The Wiersbe Bible Commentary, p.1048).



### The Central Lesson:

**Be ENCOURAGED - God is on His throne & He is in control.**

#### The **THRONE** in Heaven - Revelation 4

1. **ON** the throne - Almighty God (4:2-3).

*"2 And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and **someone** sitting **on** it. 3 The **one** sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian..."*

God is the One sitting on the throne. John's description of God was both vague and majestic. He was apparently in awe of what he saw. God's appearance was breathtaking, brilliant, and beautiful. Also, as we continue to read, the throne of God is at the center of everything, and everything is positioned in relationship to the throne.

2. **AROUND** the throne (4:3-4)

*"3...And the **glow** of an emerald **circled** his throne like a rainbow. 4 Twenty-four thrones **surrounded** him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all **clothed in white** and had **gold crowns** on their heads."*

- a. A **rainbow** (4:3) symbolizes **God's mercy & faithfulness**. God told Noah that the rainbow was a reminder that He would never again destroy the world with water (see Genesis 9:11-17).
- b. The **24 elders** (4:4) represent **the Church** which sings the song of redemption (see 5:8-10) and worships God (4:9-11).

3. **FROM** the throne - lightning, rumblings, and thunder (4:5) which remind us of Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:16) and symbolize God's **power** and **majesty**.

*"5 **From** the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder..."*

In the Old Testament storms accompanied God's presence at the tabernacle.

4. **BEFORE** the throne (4:5-6)

*"5...And in **front** of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is **the sevenfold Spirit of God**. 6 In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal..."*

- a. **Seven lamps & the seven spirits of God** (4:5) symbolize the **fullness of the Holy Spirit** and the seven ministries of the Spirit mentioned in Isaiah 11:2.

- Why didn't John simply say "The Holy Spirit"?

The expression "*the sevenfold Spirit of God*" was also mentioned in Rev. 3:1 concerning the Church at Sardis. The answer is that this is a reference to the Holy Spirit described in **Isaiah 11:2-3** from the Greek Septuagint that described the future Messiah as having the Holy Spirit in His seven manifestations: *the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, godliness, and the fear of God*. The church at Sardis needed the fullness of the Spirit because it was dying. In heaven before the throne of God is the fullness of God's Spirit.

- b. A **sea of glass** (4:6) represents the **purity** and **holiness** of God.

5. In the **CENTER** around the throne - four living creatures (4:6-9)

*"6...In the **center** and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back.7 The first of these living beings was like a lion; the second was like an ox; the third had a human face; and the fourth was like an eagle in flight. 8 Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.' 9 Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever)"*

The four living creatures symbolize

- God's **majesty** and **power** (the lion),
- **faithfulness** (the ox),
- **intelligence** (the man), and
- **sovereignty** (the eagle).

The prophet Ezekiel saw four similar creatures in his vision of God's throne (Ezekiel 1:5-10).

### Conclusion -

**Be ENCOURAGED, God is on His throne & He is in control.**

**Action Steps:** ► Receive Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's Bible study. ► Attend a small group. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus. ► Read Revelation 4. *What do you learn about heaven?*