

Jesus told John to 'Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;'

Rev 4:1: *'After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. ³ And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.'*

John knows he is, *'in the spirit;'* we don't know exactly what that means. It may be that, for this time while John is taken up into Heaven, his soul is, as always, within his spirit, which is always within God's Spirit, but perhaps his physical self was left behind. His flesh is still sinful so it could not enter into God's Holy Righteous, sinless Presence, into His throne room.

When Paul was taken up into the third Heaven to receive instruction from Jesus, concerning so much of our doctrine for the Church, he didn't know whether or not he was still within his flesh. Paul wrote, *'I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)* such an one caught up to the third heaven.'² Cor 12:2 Paul didn't know which it was.

Whether John is in his spiritual body alone or also in his physical form, he is in Heaven and God is going to show him the things which will happen after that Earth changing split second of the Rapture. We also don't know whether John is being shown visions of the future or he is actually being taken into the future.

The first thing John sees is God on His throne. Some sardine and jasper stone have a fiery orange/red/yellow appearance. John probably sees God as brightly shining, gloriously; around Him, and His throne, John sees a rainbow, filling God's throne room, the color of which is a deep green like emerald.

After Noah left the Ark, God set in the sky a glorious rainbow, probably very bright with sharply defined colors, unlike the usually washed out colors we see in rainbows. He created the rainbow as the sign of His promise to never again destroy the World with rain and flood. Whenever it rained, again, and we can only imagine how frightening it would have been to these who had just witnessed the entire World being covered in water, after it's having never rained before; they would be able to see the rainbow and be reassured that the rain would eventually stop. It didn't mean there would never be times of flooding, locally, but never again what it had been, God's judgment and destruction. Next time God judges the World, it will be with fire and complete annihilation at the end of His 1000 year reign on Earth, the Millennium, during which we will rule and reign at His side as His Bride.

He gave the rainbow as the sign of His promise and that sign is backed up by His very being, throne and home; God was giving a promise that would never be broken.

There is a definite reason why Satan has led the vast homosexual rebellion to grasp, as its symbol, God's rainbow. Multitudes now recognize the rainbow only as the 'sign' of homosexuality; they have no clue that, not only is it God's promise to never again judge the World by water but, even more importantly, it is also the sign of God's promise that He will judge the Earth again and His judgment on evil men will, this time, be with Everlasting Fire. Every time a sinner defiantly embraces the rainbow in glorification of their sin, they are, in fact, embracing and fully justifying God's soon coming righteous judgment upon that sinner.

Verse 4: *'And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.'*

The Greek word John uses here, for 'seat,' is *thronos*; it definitely means throne; these 24 elders are sitting upon thrones situated around God's Throne; these elders sit on thrones with crowns upon their heads.

We read that we, the Bride of Jesus Christ, will rule and reign with Him forever. We will be clothed in glorified, eternal bodies like Jesus Christ's own body and we will be enthroned by God, as His representatives; we will rule and reign as kings and priests unto God forever.

We are coheirs with the Lord Jesus Christ; all things are ours; all that God the Son possesses will be ours. Surely, none of it will matter, in the least, when compared to the joy of being with Him but, nonetheless, we **will inherit all things**.

The Prodigal Son and his father are given as pictures of our relationship with God. When the son returns, in humility, the father says, of him, *'He was dead and is now alive.'* To the elder son, who was angry at his father's celebration of his brother, the father said to him, *'Son, thou art ever with me, and **all that I have is thine**.'* Luke 15 All that God has is Christ's and all that He has will be ours as His co-heirs.

These 24 elders are probably 12 representatives of Israel, the Earthly people of God, and 12 representatives of the True Church, the Heavenly people of God.

What do these elders tell us?

John is either seeing a vision or has been taken to the future; this can't be real time for then or for now because we are still here; we haven't been raptured, and we haven't received our eternal bodies or rewards. These elders have received rewards; they have been given tremendous thrones of authority... actually sitting with God, the Father, in His throne room.

They have bodies capable of sitting on thrones and of having crowns upon their heads, something a soul within a spirit, alone, cannot do.

What John is seeing is, 24 men who have gone through the Rapture and have received their glorified bodies and their rewards; they have passed through the Judgment Seat of Christ; their works have been purified by fire with those of worth coming out like gold, silver and precious stones.

'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' 2 Cor 5:10

'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.' 1 Cor 3:11

'I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.' Dan 7:9

John is seeing God's throne room just after the Rapture.

Verse 5: *'And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.'*

God and His throne are the ultimate in might, majesty, power and awe. The 'seven Spirits of God' are the seven aspects of the Holy Spirit. We see this in Isaiah; God's Spirit will rest upon the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ: 'And the 1. Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of 2. wisdom and 3. understanding, the spirit of 4. counsel and 5. might, the spirit of 6. knowledge and of the 7. fear of the LORD...'

Verse 6: *'And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal:'*

In the Tabernacle and then, the Temple, the priests were to wash in the water of the bronze basin before they could approach God. This symbolized the cleansing of sin. Hebrews tells us: *'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.'* Heb 4:16

We do not need to wash before approaching God; we have been cleansed and perfected by Jesus Christ's sacrifice for us on the Cross: *'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified... And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.'* Heb 10:14

This 'sea of glass' is a huge expanse; to John it looks like glass or crystal; it could very well be 100% diamond or

something else even far more beautiful, still.

Something to understand and remember as John is in God's throne room and especially in the later chapters: everything about God is overwhelming, awe inspiring greatness; God is awful! The majesty of earthly palaces and castles are as outhouses compared to all that is God and the dwelling place He has created for Himself and for His children; everything is incomprehensibly over-the-top! He has made a place for us, the walls and streets of which are pure gold: gold so pure that it's transparent. That place has 12 gates, each one of which is a single, huge pearl. Everything John will see, his understanding and description are wholly limited by the inadequacies of human thought and language. None of it can be sufficiently conveyed; we are forced to use our imaginations and even then, it is completely beyond us... for now... but one day soon... we will see and understand!

Verse 6b: *'... and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.'*

These four beasts, being full of eyes represents God's all-seeing, all-knowing, ever-present eternal existence; they watch over and guard God and His throne although God needs no guarding at all.

Verse 7: *'And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.'*

Ezekiel sees these four living creatures but to him, they appear as men: *'Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man... ⁶ And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings... Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward... As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.'* Ezekiel 1:5

The living creatures represent the four aspects of God, the Son as He is presented in the four Gospels: John stresses His Kingship and Kingdom, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Mark presents Him as the servant/sacrifice, the calf or ox. Luke pictures Him as the perfect man and in John, as, the eagle which flies and nests far above all the others, the Son of God come down from Heaven.

Verse 8: *'And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.'*

These living creatures are a certain class of angel, seraphs, or, seraphim.

In Isaiah, we see: *'In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. ² Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. ³ And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.'* Isa 6:1

These seraphim have one purpose: the glory of God, to glorify God with all that they are; actually, in essence, they serve the same purpose as every created thing: the glory of God. These, however exemplify such that it is all they do, always.

Verse 9: *'And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, ¹⁰ The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'*

What can we add? God's number one purpose in all of time and eternity is... the Glory of God! Always and forevermore... God will be glorified... through these 4 living creatures, through these 24 elders, through the World's wicked over whom He will cast His Righteous and Holy Wrath... through all His angels, Elect and rebellious alike... through every person rightly cast into the eternal Lake of Fire... and finally... through every one of us, His beloved and Elect... Israel and the Church, the Bride and Body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will, like these 24, praise, exalt and worship Him forever!