

I. Introduction

If chapters 2-3 describe visions concerning the churches on earth, chapters 4-5 describe a vision of the heavenly throne.

They reveal God's supreme majesty and glory in heaven – praise, worship, and glory.

They give comfort and strength to the church persecuted by Rome – God is the One who reigns and rules.

They show that authority over judgment and salvation belongs to God.

II. Main Body

1. The Invitation into the Vision of the Heavenly Throne (v.1)

Whenever God reveals a vision, heaven is opened (Ezek. 1:1; Acts 10:11; 7:56).

There are three major views regarding the heavenly throne vision in chapter 4:

It should be interpreted literally (John Walvoord) – it must be understood exactly as it appears.

It is 100% symbolic and visionary (Raymond Brown, Hamilton, Hendriksen).

A real heavenly reality is shown through symbols and visions (George Ladd, Richard Bauckham).

The vision in chapter 4 is presented through symbols and imagery so that human beings can understand it.

2. The Glory of the Heavenly Throne Seen in the Spirit (vv.2-3)

What does it mean to be “in the Spirit”? (Ezek. 3:12; 8:3; Dan. 8:2)

Though John's body was on the island of Patmos, his spirit was taken up to heaven, enabling him to see the vision.

The glory of the heavenly throne – precious stones, a rainbow, a sea of glass, etc.

3. The Twenty-Four Elders (v.4)

The 12 tribes of the Old Testament + the 12 apostles of the New Testament = representing all of God's redeemed people.

Revelation 21:12, 14 – the 12 tribes on the gates and the 12 apostles on the foundation stones.

White garments and golden crowns – the rewards given to the redeemed saints.

The 24 elders represent believers who reign with the Lord as a royal priesthood (Eph. 2:5-6).

4. Judgment and the Holy Spirit from the Throne (v.5)

Lightning, voices, and thunder symbolize God's presence and judgment (Exod. 19:16-18; Rev. 8:5; 11:19).

The seven lamps are the seven spirits – the Holy Spirit working in perfect fullness (Zechariah 4).

5. The Four Living Creatures Before the Throne (vv.6-9)

Full of eyes in front and behind, and having six wings.

This imagery is based on the visions in Ezekiel 1 and 10.

In Ezekiel 10:1, 18 they are called cherubim (Gen. 3:24; Ps. 99:1; 1 Sam. 4:4).

In Isaiah 6:2-3, they are called seraphim.

They are heavenly beings representing God's renewed creation, continually praising and worshiping Him.

6. The Praise of the Twenty-Four Elders (vv.10-11)

They lay down their golden crowns – returning their rewards to the Lord in humility (Luke 17:10).

They bow in worship and exalt God – humility and glorifying Him.

III. Conclusion

Our mission and purpose of existence is to glorify God through worship and praise.

God, who sits on the heavenly throne, reigns and is the sovereign Lord of both judgment and salvation.

Bible Memorization

A VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“Everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made.” (Isaiah 43:7)

Bible Reading

2/23(Mon)	2/24(Tue)	2/25(Wed)	2/26(Thur)	2/27(Fri)	2/28(Sat)	3/1(Sun)
Numbers 8-10	Numbers 11-14	Numbers 15-16	Numbers 17-19	Numbers 20-22	Numbers 23-25	Numbers 26-27

QT

Quiet Time Passage

2/23(Mon)	2/24(Tue)	2/25(Wed)	2/26(Thur)	2/27(Fri)	2/28(Sat)	3/1(Sun)
Matthew 16:13-28	Matthew 17:1-13	Matthew 17:14-27	Matthew 18:1-9	Matthew 18:10-20	Matthew 18:21-35	Matthew 19:1-12

Sharing Questions

1. Share one new insight or grace you received from today’s sermon.
2. If Revelation 2-3 concern the churches on earth, and chapters 4-5 concern the heavenly throne, and from chapter 6 onward we see judgment and salvation, what is the significance of the throne vision (chapters 4-5) within the overall message of Revelation?
3. What symbols describe the glory and beauty of God’s heavenly throne?
4. What do the twenty-four elders symbolize?
5. What can we learn from the praise and worship offered by the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders?