

EVENTS IN HEAVEN PRIOR TO THE TRIBULATION

Chapters four and five of the Revelation record events transpiring in Heaven just before the Tribulation.

THE THREEFOLD DIVISION OF REVELATION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. The things you see – the vision of the glorified Lord
2. The things that are – the history of the Church
3. The things that will take place in the future- the future events to take place after the Church has been taken out of the earth.

We are living now in the close of the second period, “the things that are”, awaiting our Savior and Lord, Yahshua coming to take us through the rapture.

The Throne of God – Revelation 4:1:1-11

After this I looked, and behold, **a door standing open in heaven!** And the first voice which I had heard addressing me like a war trumpet said, Come up there, and I will show you what must take place in the future (v.1). Behold a throne stood in heaven, with One seated on the throne (v.2b)!

After the message to the churches, John looked and saw a door opened in heaven, with a first voice as if it were of a trumpet talking to him; the voice invited him to enter heaven to be shown the things which will pass (4:1). According to the late Lehman Strauss, a wonderful servant of God, this voice sounding like a trumpet calling John “Up here”, is symbolic of the trumpet of God, calling His church at the time of the rapture, which we find in I Thess. 4:16, 17 which reads, For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living ones who remain, shall simultaneously be caught up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always we shall be with the Lord! **It is symbolic of the fulfillment of God’s promise to His church.** He promised us He would “Keep His Church from the hour of trial that is coming upon the whole world (3:10).

When the door of heaven opened to John, he was immediately in the Spirit. His translation was immediate from earth to heaven. Likewise will the rapture of the Church be “immediately”, “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” (I Corinthians 15:52). John was translated instantaneously from Patmos to the third Heaven, God’s abode.

The Apostle John identified the voice he heard calling him, “as if it were a trumpet”. This is the same trumpet voice which the Apostle Paul mentioned or described in His prediction of the Rapture. “Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (I Corinthians 15:51-52). As the trumpet voice summoned John to heaven, so will it call us to that meeting in the air. Symbolically this open door to heaven represents the open door for the Church to enter in the time of the rapture.

John sees the true Church being caught up to heaven, and the One in His eternal throne. The sitter upon the throne is not named. However according to Seiss, here is “the unnamable, indescribable Godhead, in which Father, Son and Holy Spirit are consubstantial, and the same”. The description of the One who seated on the throne is beyond the human mind understanding and imagination. It was in that atmosphere of perfect holiness, and worship, by the twenty-four elders and the four creatures, where the Deity was seated on His throne, in the brightness of jasper and the fiery sardius, with a halo encircling His throne in a rainbow appearance of the color of emerald, with flashes of lightning and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of His throne seven blazing torches burning, also with twenty-four other thrones surrounding His throne with the twenty-four elders, **arrayed in white clothing, with crowns of gold on their heads** worshiping God, prostrating before Him and throwing their crowns down before the throne, crying out saying, Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and dominion, for You created all things; by Your will they were and were created; and with the four creatures who day and night never stop saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty (Rev. 4:1-5). John was translated

by the Spirit, and entered into the presence of the holy God and saw Him like no one else on earth had ever seen Him, to receive the revelation of future events.

THE PERSONS “ROUND ABOUT THE THRONE” (4:4)

We know they are not angels, but human beings, for the song they sing show them to have been redeemed. “And they sung a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals; for you were slain and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people, and nation (Revelation 5:9). Why the number twenty-four? Because the number twenty-four is a representation of the entire heavenly priesthood – the redeemed who have died in the past, the Church of the present age and the Old Testament saints. Their description as being “clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold” (4:4), speaks of perfect righteousness in reference to the Bride of Christ (Revelation 19:8). The redeemed and the raptured are now with Yahshua and are like Him, “Beloved, we are now God’s children; it is not yet disclosed what we shall be [hereafter], but we know that when He comes and is manifested, we shall [as God’s children] resemble and be like Him, for we shall see Him just as He [really] is”.

The key word of chapter four is **throne**; it often speaks of **judgment**. Revelation is **the throne book of the Bible; it starts with a “throne” (1:4) and ends with a “throne” (22:3).**

And out of the throne preceded lightnings and thundering and voices: there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God (4:5). We must know that this throne is the throne of judgment; here John sees the day when judgment will go forth from the throne of Deity. The proceedings of lightnings, thunders and voices speak of a dreadful storm that is about to come to earth, called the Great Tribulation. The time of grace is gone; all that remains now is the time of judgment. The number seven represented here *on the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, are the seven Spirits of God* (4:5). These are not seven different spirits, but the sevenfold fullness and completeness of the Holy Spirit’s omniscience and omnipotence, who now takes His judicial character, expressed by fire, since it is a symbol of divine judgment. He descended upon

Yahshua as a dove, but here He is “**the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning**” (Isaiah 4:4). Each member of the Holy Trinity is viewed in connection with the righteous character of the throne; each one is prepared to execute judgment.

Source: Revelation by Lehman Strauss