

LESSON 3 — THE THRONE ROOM

Revelation 4:1–11

THEME: Before John is shown the turmoil of history, he is shown the throne that governs history. Heaven is not reacting to events on earth; the Lord reigns, His Church is secure around Him, and all creation exists to praise Him.

1. “A DOOR STANDING OPEN” (4:1–2)

The vision shifts from Christ among the churches (chapters 1–3) to the heavenly throne room. John is not escaping reality; he is being shown the reality that earthly sight cannot perceive.

“Come up here” is addressed to John as the recipient of the vision. It is not a description of a secret rapture of the Church.

Key Question: Why must John see the throne before he sees the seals, trumpets, beasts, and judgments?

2. THE ONE SEATED ON THE THRONE (4:2–6)

Image	Old Testament Background	Meaning	Class Notes
Throne	Isaiah 6:1; Daniel 7:9–10	God’s absolute rule	_____
Jasper / Sardius	Exodus 28:17–20	Unapproachable glory	_____
Rainbow	Genesis 9:12–17; Ezekiel 1:28	Covenant mercy surrounds the throne	_____
Lightning / Thunder	Exodus 19:16–19	Holy judgment and divine speech	_____
Seven Lamps	Zechariah 4; Revelation 1:4	The Holy Spirit active in the earth	_____
Sea of Glass	Exodus 24:10; Ezekiel 1:22	Chaos subdued; perfect calm before God	_____

The central fact of Revelation 4 is not what the enthroned One looks like, but that He is seated.

What comfort is contained in that single word “seated”? _____

3. THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS (4:4)

Symbol	Biblical Background	Likely Significance
Twenty-four	Twelve tribes + twelve apostles	The whole Church of God, Old and New Testament
White garments	Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:3–5	Righteousness received from God, not achieved by sinners
Golden crowns	2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12	Victory granted to those preserved in faith
Thrones	Daniel 7:9, 22; Matthew 19:28	The saints share in Christ’s victory and royal dignity

Discussion: Why do the elders cast their crowns before God instead of admiring or displaying them?

4. THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES (4:6–8)

Feature	Background	Emphasis
Lion / Ox / Man / Eagle	Ezekiel 1:5–14; 10:20	The nobility, strength, intelligence, and swiftness of animate creation
Six wings	Isaiah 6:2	Heavenly servants ready to do God’s will
Full of eyes	Ezekiel 1:18; 10:12	Nothing in creation is hidden from God
“Holy, holy, holy”	Isaiah 6:3	The triune God is utterly set apart in majesty

5. THE WORSHIP OF HEAVEN (4:8–11)

The creatures praise God for His eternal holiness. The elders praise Him as Creator: “You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.” Revelation begins its heavenly worship with creation; chapter 5 will center that worship upon redemption by the Lamb.

Earthly appearance	History seems unstable, violent, and uncontrolled.
Heavenly reality	The throne is occupied; God governs every event.
The Church	Clothed, crowned, enthroned, and gathered safely around God.
True worship	Returns every gift and every crown to the One from whom it came.

TAKE-HOME TRUTH

The Church does not interpret heaven by what is happening on earth. Revelation teaches us to interpret earth by what John sees in heaven: God reigns, His covenant mercy surrounds His throne, His saints are secure, and all creation must finally acknowledge Him as worthy.

Closing Question: How should Revelation 4 change the way a Christian responds to frightening events in the world?
