

Revelation Study – Ch.4:1-7:8

4 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." **2** At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. **3** And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. **4** Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. **5** From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits^[a] of God. **6** Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. **7** The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. **8** Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

"Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God Almighty,^{'[b]}
who was, and is, and is to come."

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being."

Meta Tauta – After this/after these things. The rest of the the Revelation is separated into six units which begin with Meta Tauta – After this/after these things. The first unit is Chapter 4:1-7:8.

READ CHAPTER 4

Two theories on meta tauta – against pre-trib and pre-trib

The first theory is that the revelation is moving through perspectives and/or periods of time, not necessarily both. When Yochanan says, “after this” accompanied by a change in perspective, “I looked,” “I saw,” “I heard” that is a change in perspective, but when after this is alone without a change in perspective it indicates a change in a period of time.

The pre-trib theory - “After this” is meta tauta in Greek, and it refers to “after the ‘Grace Period’ is past”. Grace Period is defined as:

1) for Christians it is known as the ‘Church Dispensation’.

2) for Torah-observant Messianism it is the same period but identified as the ‘Period not Under the Letter of the Law’ but the ‘Period Under the Grace of the Law’ as the death penalty when you break the Law (Torah) has been paid by Y’shua.

For simplicity sake and accepted by both groups that grace prevails during this time, we will call it the ‘Grace Period’. Thus, the Bride from now on after the Grace Period is in Heaven. The trumpet here in verse 1 is the same as the trumpet of 1 Thes 4: 16; 1 Cor 15: 52. All three verses refer to the ‘same’ trumpet of Elohim that will be the ‘last’ trumpet for the Bride and the last trumpet on Yom Teruah (Day of Blowing / Feast of Trumpets) and not the last trumpet of the seven trumpet judgments of Revelation. This is why, from now on, you never read of the Bride on earth again until Rev 19: 11. This simply means that the Bride is Raptured away immediately after the ‘first voice’ spoke.

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- The door - When Yochanan says, “a door opened” he really does mean that there is an opening, a portal, something that he passes through which indicates a total change in spiritual perspective. Isaiah also “saw” his visions. Isaiah 6, for example is where Isaiah “saw the Lord and His train filled the temple.” Prophecy

is either prophecy of word or of vision. I heard or I saw are both ways prophets refer to the prophecy that they receive.

The first voice we hear is Y'shua's voice. "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

² At once ***I was in the Spirit***, and there ***before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.*** In the Spirit is a Hebrew idiom that means in a vision or trance.

Sha'ul refers to the throne in ***2 Corinthians 5:10*** ¹⁰ ***For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.***, but he calls it a bema. A bema is the seat at Greek Olympic stadiums where the elite would come and judge the games. The winners would stand before those seated on the bema and receive their reward.

The one seated on the throne – This is YHWH. Daniel 7:9-10 ⁹ "As I looked,

"thrones were set in place,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
His clothing was as white as snow;
the hair of his head was white like wool.
His throne was flaming with fire,
and its wheels were all ablaze.

¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing,
coming out from before him.
Thousands upon thousands attended him;
ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
The court was seated,
and the books were opened.

The only image of the ancient of days seated on the throne is in Revelation and Daniel. It will come up again. No one has seen the invisible God.

- ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne.
- The references to stones all have symbolic meaning.

The closest that one could get to a description of YHWH's excellence and brightness, was to compare it with radiant precious stones.

Jasper is a crystal clear stone like a diamond and symbolizes purity and

Sardius is deep red and symbolizes the blood of the Lamb (as the Son is also a manifestation of the Father, but in the flesh).

In the TaNaCh, we find other significance for precious stones. Each of the 12 Tribes of Israel was represented by a gemstone.

Reuben (means “behold, a son”), Jacob’s first-born son, was represented by the jasper (crystal clear).

Benjamin (means “son of my right hand”), Jacob’s twelfth son, was represented by the sardius, a beautiful red stone. So, the stones represent YHWH the Son in purity (crystal clear jasper) and redemption (the blood-red sardius), who is the First and the Last.

The rainbow around the throne forms a circle, which symbolizes never-ending. It is also a reminder of YHWH’s covenant with us (Gen 9: 12-17).

Emerald is green and symbolizes eternal life.

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⁴ Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

The 24 Elders –

Theory 1: They can represent the Priesthood of the Old Covenant (1 Chron 24: 1-19).

Theory 2: They can be a representation of 12 Patriarchs out of the TaNaCh and 12 Apostles out of the New Covenant.

Theory 3: They can represent the 12 Tribes of Israel who sit as Queen (Rev 20: 4) and the 12 Apostles of Y’shua, as will be written in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21: 10-14).

Theory 4: This means the Believers who were resurrected immediately after the resurrection of Y’shua (Matt 27: 52⁵² and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.) and ascended into Heaven with Y’shua are the 24 elders. This make them the “Firstfruits” (James 1: 18) of those resurrected who are dead in union with the Messiah, just as the 144,000 will be the “Firstfruits” of those sealed as the Redeemed of YHWH (Rev 14: 1, 4).

White robes indicate they are righteous (Rev 19: 8).

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⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits^(a) of God.

“Lightnings, thunderings, and voices” in Scripture are the signs of the awesome presence of YHWH. There were also lightnings, thunderings, and a sound of a trumpet so loud from Mount Sinai when the Torah Ketubah Wedding Contract was given and Israel’s 12 Tribes were established as YHWH’s Bride. The millions of people in the camp at the base of the mountain trembled with fear (Exod 19: 16). “Fire” is a sign throughout Scripture of the Spirit of YHWH active in the purification of His People and the destruction of His enemies. “Seven Spirits” is explained in Rev 1: 4 and 3: 1.

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⁶ Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

The Crystal Sea

Before a worshipper can draw near to the throne, he must be cleansed and sanctified (Heb 12: 14) through the “crystal sea” as the Priests in the TaNaCh had to wash themselves before entering YHWH’s Presence (1 Kings 7: 23); a huge wash basin for the cleansing of priests. This sea mingled with fire (Rev 15: 2) will possibly also be the place where your works will be tested with fire for your rewards (1 Cor 3: 13).

The Creatures - In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

“Holy, holy, holy

is the Lord God Almighty,^(b)

who was, and is, and is to come.”

They should never be called ‘beasts’ as some translations say; but rather, creatures. The term “beasts” is “Zoon” in Greek, which means “living creature” and is literally “created beings”. These are called Cherubim and are the highest ranking angelic beings. They are assigned to guarding and bearing Elohim’s throne (Psalm 99: 1).

They are also associated with the worship of El Shaddai (God Almighty). This is the reason why Elohim instructed Moshe to make two Cherubim to guard the mercy seat of the ark (Exod 25: 18; 37: 7-9), to enable us to understand how the throne of Elohim looks in Heaven. They also guarded the entrance to the Garden of Eden, where Elohim dwelt (Gen 3: 24). You will also find them in Ezek 1: 4-28 and 10: 1-22 (They must not be mistaken for Seraphim, who are literally “burning ones” as in Isaiah 6: 2). “In the “midst of the throne” (also 5: 6 and 7: 17) is difficult to visualize. The Greek word (mesos) can also mean “amongst”. It can also mean in the center of the throne room, in front of and around the throne. “Covered with eyes” indicates unceasing watchfulness, meaning they are alert and always ready to protect.

There are various theories concerning the four creatures:

Theory 1: They refer to the four Gospels, and they stand between YHWH and the 24 elders. In Matthew, Y’shua is described as the lion - Y’shua as King in a Kingdom. In Mark, Y’shua is described as the calf - Y’shua seen as a servant. In Luke, Y’shua is described as the perfect man in normal life. In John, Y’shua is described as the eagle because He is the Son of YHWH coming from Heaven in all His glory.

Theory 2: It can also refer to the four divisions of the Israel camp around the Tabernacle (Num 2: 1-34; Gen 49). On the east was Judah with two tribes behind him - their emblem was a lion. On the west was Ephraim with two tribes behind him - their emblem was a calf. On the south was Reuben with two tribes behind him - their emblem was a man. On the north was Dan with two tribes behind him - their emblem was an eagle. They had to camp around the Tabernacle to protect it and Yahweh’s dwelling place is in the centre (Num 2: 3, 10, 18, 25).

Theory 3: The Cherubim may also represent the aspects of creation. The lion represents the wild animals and / or nobility. The calf represents the tamed animals and/ or strength. The man represents human beings and / or wisdom. The eagle represents the birds and/ or swiftness.

Is it possible that Lucifer / the snake represented the cold-blooded animals, but because he was thrown out of heaven they are not represented here at the throne?

Theory 4: From Biblical and extra-Biblical sources (the book of Enoch) that the four creatures are the four archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel. The creatures in Ezek 1 and 10 only had four wings – these have six.

⁹Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall down before

him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being."

The two roles of the four creatures are to worship YHWH 24/ 7 (4: 8; 5: 9, 10, 12, 14; 7: 12; 19: 4) and to direct John's attention to what happens on Earth when the first four seals are broken (6: 1; 3, 5, 7) and assist with the bowl judgments in chapters 15 and 16.

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Chapter 4: Dalet letter – Numerical value 4 Meaning (dalet) The door; the way. Encoded in this Chapter The 4th letter of the Hebrew aleph-beit fits perfectly in this chapter. 'Dalet' stands for a 'door' or 'way.' That is exactly what we see as Yochanan writes, "after this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven" (4: 1).

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