

**After These Things
Welcome to the Near Future / The Divine Council
Revelation 4:1 – 4**

Scripture quotations are taken from the following translations:

ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB),
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,
1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission. www.Lockman.org**

Scripture quoted by permission. Quotations designated (NET) are from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996-2016 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://netbible.com> All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Chapter 4 is a brand-new point on our outline of Revelation
Let's take another look at our roadmap

Revelation 1:19

“Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.” (NASB95)

Outline

- ~~1. Introduction 1:1 – 3~~
- ~~2. Salutation 1:4 – 8~~
- ~~3. The things you have seen~~
 - ~~a. Jesus glorified 1: 9 – 16~~
 - ~~b. What it means 1:17 – 20~~
- ~~4. The things which are~~
 - ~~a. Ephesus 2:1 – 7~~
 - ~~b. Smyrna 2: 8 – 11~~
 - ~~c. Pergamum 2: 12 – 17~~
 - ~~d. Thyatira 2:18 – 29~~
 - ~~e. Sardis 3:1 – 6~~
 - ~~f. Philadelphia 3: 7 – 13~~
 - ~~g. Laodicea 3: 14 – 22~~
5. The things which will take place after these things
 - a. The divine council and Jesus
 - i. The throne room 4:1 – 11
 - ii. The property deal of all eternity 5:1 – 14
 - b. The 70th 7 of Daniel
 - i. The first 3 ½ years
 1. The seal judgements 6:1 – 17
 2. The 144,000 7:1 – 8
 3. Tribulation saints 7:2 – 17
 4. The seventh seal = the trumpet judgements 8:1 – 9:21
 - ii. Halftime
 1. The little book 10:1 – 11
 2. The tribulation temple 11:1 – 2

3. The two witnesses 11:3 – 14
4. The seventh trumpet 11:15 – 19
5. Israel, the birth of Jesus, and war 12:1 – 17
6. The monster from the sea 13:1 – 10
7. The monster from the earth 13:11 – 18
8. A word or two from our sponsor 14:1 – 20
- iii. The last 3 ½ years
 1. The warm up 15:1 – 8
 2. The bowl judgements 16:1 – 21
- iv. The two Babylons
 1. Religious Babylon (1st half) 17:1 – 18
 2. Political Babylon (2nd half) 18:1 – 24
- c. The Second Coming, mopping up and consolidating
 - i. Setting the stage 19:1 – 10
 - ii. The Second Coming of Christ 19:11 – 18
 - iii. Armageddon 19:19
 - iv. Finally (the anti-Christ and the False Prophet get theirs) 19:20
 - v. The gentile armies 19:21
 - vi. Satan in chains 20:1 – 3
- d. The Kingdom of Messiah
 - i. Messiah on the throne 20:4
 - ii. The first resurrection 20:5 – 6
- e. At the end of the millennium
 - i. The final revolt 20:7 – 10
 - ii. The Great White Throne Judgement 20:11 – 15
- f. All things are new
 - i. The new, new world order 21:1 – 8
 - ii. New Jerusalem 21:9 – 22:5
6. Wrapping it all up
 - a. Authentication 22:6 – 9
 - b. A final word 22:10 – 16
 - c. One more invitation 22:17
 - d. A warning 22:18 – 19
 - e. One more affirmation 22:20
 - f. Benediction 22:21

This section of scripture is also descriptive of something we have already seen in the Word. John is familiar with this and so would have that framework already existing. This portion of Revelation, more specifically chapter 4 and 5, has some linkage to the book of Daniel. From G. K. Beale and Sean M McDonough:

“...they exhibit a unified structure that corresponds more to the structure of Dan. 7 than to any other vision in the OT. If we begin with Dan. 7:9–28 and observe the elements and order of their presentation that are in common with Rev. 4–5, a striking resemblance is discernible:

1. Introductory vision phraseology (Dan. 7:9 [cf. 7:2, 6–7]; Rev. 4:1)
2. The setting of a throne(s) in heaven (Dan. 7:9a; Rev. 4:2a [cf. 4:4a])
3. God sitting on a throne (Dan. 7:9b; Rev. 4:2b)
4. The description of God’s appearance on the throne (Dan. 7:9c; Rev. 4:3a)
5. Fire before the throne (Dan. 7:9d–10a; Rev. 4:5)
6. Heavenly servants surrounding the throne (Dan. 7:10b; Rev. 4:4b, 6b–10; 5:8, 11, 14)
7. Book(s) before the throne (Dan. 7:10c; Rev. 5:1–7)
8. The “opening” of the book(s) (Dan. 7:10d; Rev. 5:2–5, 9)
9. A divine (messianic) figure approaches God’s throne in order to receive authority to reign forever over a “kingdom” (Dan. 7:13–14a; Rev. 5:5b–7, 9a, 12–13)
10. This “kingdom” includes “all peoples, nations, and tongues” (Dan. 7:14a MT; Rev. 5:9b)

11. The seer's emotional distress on account of the vision (Dan. 7:15; Rev. 5:4)
12. The seer's reception of heavenly counsel concerning the vision from one among the heavenly throne servants (Dan. 7:16; Rev. 5:5a)
13. The saints are also given divine authority to reign over a kingdom (Dan. 7:18, 22, 27a; Rev. 5:10)
14. A concluding mention of God's eternal reign (Dan. 7:27b; Rev. 5:13–14)

Both visions also contain the image of a sea (Dan. 7:2–3; Rev. 4:6). From the comparison it can be seen that Rev. 4–5 repeats the same fourteen elements from Dan. 7:9–28 in the same basic order, but with small variations that result from the expansion of images. For example, Rev. 5 places the messianic figure's approach to the throne after the mention of the seer's emotional distress and reception of angelic counsel and before the actual opening of the books. On the other hand, Dan. 7 has the approach of the "son of man" before the seer's distress and reception of counsel and has the opening of books before the approach of the "son of man." Further, Rev. 4–5 contains more description of the heavenly throne servants than does Dan. 7 and repeatedly portrays their presence around the throne, whereas they are mentioned only three times in Daniel." (Beale and McDonough 2007, 1098)

We covered a lot of this when we studied the book of Daniel. I am including the notes for Daniel 7 for those who want to dig deeper. REVELATION NOTES CONTINUE ON PAGE 20

World History In Advance YAHWEH's View Of World History Daniel 7:1 – 14

The first six chapters of Daniel have been history

There was prophecy mixed in, but predominately we saw historic events and the story of how Nebuchadnezzar and Darius became believers and showed to the Jews that the message of who YAHWEH is, will be proclaimed by gentiles.

The rest of Daniel is all prophecy.

We are introduced to four beasts and themes which carry throughout the scriptures all the way to Revelation

This is the last chapter of Daniel to be in Aramaic and that gives us a hint as to who the first prophecy is for, it is for Gentile rulers

In chapter 8 we will return to Hebrew and God's people, but here we are still dealing with the gentile nations

We will also see that the topic of the prophecy to a degree, has already been discussed once in chapter 2 We will also see that this is now highly personal.

Daniel moves to writing in the first person.
I saw – nine times in this chapter alone
He was an eyewitness to the events he will be describing

The time frame is extensive—from the sixth century B.C. until the coming of Jesus Christ and beyond. But Daniel packs it all in through a series of vivid visions that convey far more than any mere listing of names, battles, or dates could do for us. (Boice 2003, 74)

But the difference between the first and second divisions is this: In what we have already gone over we have been chiefly occupied with prophetic history as viewed from man's standpoint; but in the second half of the book we have the same scenes as viewed in God's unsullied light. (Ironsides 1953, 117)

Daniel 7:1–8

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter. Daniel declared, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.' After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. (ESV)

Remember, Nabonidus ruled Babylon but he had other interests, and as a result he made his son, Belshazzar the second ruler in Babylon. Daniel uses that as a means to let u know when he had this first vision.

A Babylonian text indicates that Nabonidus, who ruled from 556–539 B.C., made this appointment in his third year (approximately 553). (Chisholm, Jr. 2002, 304)

This vision accords not only in many respects with the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2), but has the same subject. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 637)

As Daniel is having this vision, Babylon is still a world power.
In the past he interpreted the dreams of others, now he is the one having the dreams.

Daniel though, after having the dream, wrote it down first doing so in summary form.
The Septuagint states he placed it into a specific summary report format.
Daniel is an official, he is in his 70s at the time of this dream, he is used to writing reports/

The restless sea is a frequent biblical image for the nations of the world (Isa. 17:12–13; 57:20; 60:5; Ezek. 26:3; Rev. 13:1; 17:15). Just as the ocean is sometimes stormy, so the nations of the world are sometimes in confusion or even at war; and just as the waves and currents of the ocean are unpredictable, so the course of world history is beyond man's ability to chart or predict. (Wiersbe 2000, 86)

The beginning of the vision echoes the creation narrative of Genesis, where we read that the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters (Genesis 1: 2). The Hebrew word for Spirit can be used of breath or wind. But in Daniel's vision the wind and the sea are a prelude not to making earth into a home fit for human beings but to the rise of a sequence of animals representing world empires bent increasingly on destruction. (Lennox 2015, 227)

...the vision of Daniel provides the most comprehensive and detailed prophecy of future events to be found anywhere in the Old Testament. (Walvoord 2012, 181)

Unlike the image of the four empires that we saw with the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, this dream shows us the reality of the character of the same four empires, and yes, allusions to a fifth.

Here though, we see fully the character of the empires as they are characterized as beasts.

The perspective is clear: from one point of view, empires resemble wild animals. But, unlike humans, animals are not inhibited by moral considerations, since animals are not moral beings. Empires tend to behave like that – as amoral power blocs. The overall impression of the vision is of the dark underbelly of politics: the jockeying for power, with less and less moral qualm, until a sense of humanity and compassion disappears under the ruthless lust for domination. (Lennox 2015, 227-228)

Thus it provides a framework for more detailed revelation of these kingdoms that follows in the Book of Daniel and in the New Testament, particularly in the Book of Revelation. Chapter 7 gives more information about the four kingdoms that Daniel had already revealed in chapter 2 (cf. Ps. 2; 110). (Constable 2003, Da 6:28)

Daniel 7:4

“The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.” (ESV)

This is Babylon

The first animal was an enormous lion with the wings of an eagle. No doubt the lion was much like the statues of lions scattered around Babylon which were symbolic of the Babylonian Empire. The wings of an eagle may symbolize the power of the Babylonian Empire; or, as some suggest, the wings may represent the power and the majesty of the empire. (Simpson 2000, 58)

The lion's wings were plucked; the lion was made to stand on its back legs; the lion was given a man's heart. If this emphasis is properly understood, the vision is saying the Babylonian Empire will lose its animal-like tendencies. The empire will be limited in its aggressive inclinations. (Simpson 2000, 58)

Some commentators suggest the man's heart is a picture of Nebuchadnezzar becoming a believer. That is a possibility, but God is also revealing an affirmation of what He showed the king years before, that Babylon will fall.

Now we come to the next beast.

Daniel 7:5

"And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.'" (ESV)

The beast, like a bear, but not a bear, is on its side.

I always envisioned a large furry creature with blood dripping from its mouth using three ribs of something as toothpicks.

Unlike the previous animal which had wings and conveyed speed, this one, as a bear, appears oversize, almost ponderous.

The two sides of the beast refer to the Medes and the Persians, almost one sided though as the Persians take over

As to the ribs, there are numerous conjectures as to what they represent.

The Medes, Persians and the Babylonians? That doesn't work as an image.

A second opinion is that the ribs refer to the three nations that made an alliance to fight the Medo-Persian armies. Lydia, Egypt, and Babylon made such an alliance. The Scriptures themselves, as is obvious, do not explain the ribs. (Simpson 2000, 59)

Devour much flesh – alluding to the large number of nations they would conquer.

Isaiah 41:2–3

"Who stirred up one from the east whom victory meets at every step? He gives up nations before him, so that he tramples kings underfoot; he makes them like dust with his sword, like driven stubble with his bow. He pursues them and passes on safely, by paths his feet have not trod." (ESV)

Daniel 7:6

"After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it." (ESV)

The picture here is one of speed

The third beast (7:6) possessed speed, as indicated by its wings and leopardlike appearance. Habakkuk used the leopard as a symbol of speed and swiftness (Hab 1:8). The wings on its back emphasize its great speed and mobility. This type of imagery indicates the nature of the kings and armies involved; Alexander was still planning further conquests and organizing an empire just before he died; he had forced his army on endless marches eastward. (Carpenter 2010, 399)

Alexander and thirty-five thousand soldiers went up against the Medo-Persian army of some two or three hundred thousand men and miraculously won. (Jeremiah and Carlson 1992, 135)

Was Alexander a great strategist and military thinker. Yes, but the scripture points out clearly the why...”and dominion was given to it.”

- Alexander became king at age 20 in 336 BC.
- He liberated Sardis, Ephesus, Miletus and others defeating Darius III in 334 BC.
- He continued east defeating Darius again in 333 BC.
- He then moved down the coast towards Egypt in 332 BC and then again east where he met Darius one last time defeating him in September 331 BC.
- Continuing east he reached the Indus river and then returned to Babylon where he died in 323 BC.

Alexander’s kingdom was distributed among four Greek military leaders: Cassander claimed Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus took possession of Asia Minor as far as Tarsus, Ptolemy was granted Egypt, and Seleucus obtained the remainder of Asia Minor to the Indus River, which included most of the territory of Syria. (Bateman IV 2012, 232)

Remember those names by the way as Daniel will deal with them in much more detail.

Daniel 7:7–8

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.” (ESV)

The fourth beast is weird

Iron teeth, stamping whatever is left with its feet, and it had ten horns.

The fourth empire is characterized in several ways.

- dreadful, vv. 7, 19
- terrifying, v. 7
- extremely strong, v. 7
- iron teeth, vv. 7, 19 (DUAL in Hebrew, possibly two large teeth or two rows of teeth)
- devoured, vv. 7, 19
- crushed, vv. 7, 19
- trampled down the remainder with its feet, vv. 7, 19
- ten horns, vv. 7, 20
- a boastful little horn, vv. 7, 20
- claws of bronze, v. 19 (Utley 2005, 97-98)

Introduced by a more detailed description, the fourth beast is presented more distinctly before our notice than those which preceded it. Its terribleness and its strength, breaking in pieces and destroying all things, and the fact that no beast is named to which it can be likened, represent it as different from all the beasts that went before. This description corresponds with that of the fourth kingdom denoted by the legs and the feet of the metallic image of the monarchies (Dan. 2). (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 641)

The crucial issue in the interpretation of the entire book of Daniel, and especially of chapter 7, is the identification of the fourth beast. On this point, liberal critics generally insist that the fourth beast is Greece or the kingdom of Alexander the Great. Conservative scholars with few exceptions generally identify the fourth beast as Rome. (J. F. Walvoord 2008, 159)

More attention is given to the fourth beast than to all of the other three put together. This section is very important to us because we are living in the time of the fourth beast—the time when the ten toes and horns are beginning to manifest themselves. (McGee 1997, 571)

So, we see the fourth kingdom is Rome

A city that refused to surrender to the Romans would find itself not only conquered, but all its men killed and its women and children sold into slavery. (Jeffers 1999, 305)

Between chapter 2 and chapter 7, we see two views of the same information. Man views the kingdoms of the world as a great impressive statue made up of valuable metals. Daniel though sees as God sees, dangerous animals that will ruthlessly devour people and nations. We see something of value, but all God sees are beasts that attack and devour.

The identification of the 10 horns of this beast is more difficult. There is some obvious similarity between these 10 horns and the 10 toes of the image in chapter 2. They apparently represent 10 contemporaneous rulers (v. 17). Horns pictured strength and rulers in ancient eastern iconography, yet scholars have not been able to agree on the identification of 10 outstanding rulers of the Roman Empire who ruled simultaneously. (Constable 2003, Da 7:7)

At a point in the near future, possibly taking place today, God will revive or realign the Roman Empire. More to come on this later.

The eleventh horn rises among the ten and actually displaces 3 of the horns this horn has eyes and speaks boastful things.

Revelation 13:1–9

And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear: (ESV)

As Daniel is watching all of this, he sees another scene begin to unfold, he is in the divine council. This is a classic view of the courtroom of the universe.

Daniel 7:9–10

"As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened." (ESV)

Several things jump out at us right away. First, we know that the Ancient of Days is the God of Israel because the description of his throne as fiery and having wheels matches that of the vision of Ezekiel 1. Ezekiel's vision also included a human figure on the throne of God (Ezek 1:26–27). Second, there are many thrones in heaven, not just one ("thrones were set up"). These thrones mark the presence of the

divine council. Third, the council is called to session to decide the fate of the beasts—national empires. (Heiser 2015, 250)

Revelation 4:2–6

“At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:” (ESV)

The image conveys a sense of the unsullied purity and wisdom of the Judge who sits resplendent on his throne before an unimaginably large crowd: ten thousand times ten thousand is a hundred million! It was an overwhelming sight – a vision of the supreme court of the universe. Books were opened, indicating that the session was about to begin, when Daniel’s attention was drawn once more by the sound of the great words of the horn, the fearsome fourth beast. (Lennox 2015, 229)

We are in the throne room, the divine council is preparing to meet.
We see the scene as described by Daniel and there is also a second eye witness, John.

Daniel 7:11–12

“I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.” (ESV)

Revelation 19:20–21

“And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.” (ESV)

We have moved rapidly from an overview of history to scenes that we rapidly identify as taking place at the end of the Tribulation.

Even after being captured, per Daniel, the beast will continue to try and make his case heard. But we see that the little horn, the beast, is thrown alive into the lake of fire.

Daniel 7:13–14

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” (ESV)

Revelation 1:7–8

“Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”” (ESV)

Daniel 7:13 describes someone who appeared human coming on or with the clouds to the Ancient of Days. It is that description that points in the direction of a second deity figure in the scene. We are back to the concept of two Yahweh figures we saw earlier in the Old Testament. (Heiser 2015, 251)

Matthew 26:63–65

“But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy.” (ESV)

In what seems like a cryptic answer to a very clear question, Jesus quotes Daniel 7:13 to answer Caiaphas. The reaction is swift and unyielding. Caiaphas understood that Jesus was claiming to be the second Yahweh figure of Daniel 7:13—and that was an intolerable blasphemy. Jesus’ answer provides the high priest with the accusation he needs for a death sentence, but also gives us a clear testimony of Jesus as the final son of David, Yahweh incarnate, through whom Yahweh will reclaim the nations disinherited at Babel. (Heiser 2015, 253)

The judgment does not come to an end with the destruction of the world-power in its various embodiments. That is only its first act, which is immediately followed by the second, the erection of the kingdom of God by the Son of man. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 645)

There is more to unpack in this section of Daniel.
Fortunately, Daniel asked for some background.

More On The Future Of The World Who's Who Daniel 7: 9 – 28

Daniel 7

The vision of the four beasts coming up out of the sea.

There will be a recap thanks to Daniel asking questions of one of the divine attendants at the court room of the universe.

But to understand things a bit more, we need to take a look at the nature of predictive prophecy within the old testament.

The reason is the fourth beast, which has some characteristics we have seen in history, but also has characteristics we have not seen yet at all.

It is almost as if there are two sides to the story.

We see this throughout the old testament.

Remember – prophecy is God's history of the world from His perspective, written in advance. Prophecy is all about Christ. It begins and ends in the person and the work of the Messiah.

Revelation 19:10

"Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."" (NASB95)

Of the 333 prophecies concerning Christ, only 109 were fulfilled by His first coming, leaving 224 yet to be fulfilled in the Second Coming. There are over 300 references to the Lord's coming in the 260 chapters of the New Testament— one out of every 30 verses. Twenty-three of the 27 New Testament books mention the Lord's coming. Jesus refers to His second coming at least twenty-one times.

[There are] 1,527 Old Testament passages [that] refer to the Second Coming. For every time the Bible mentions the first coming, the Second Coming is mentioned eight times. People are exhorted to be ready for the return of Jesus Christ over fifty times. (Hitchcock 2012, 4-5)

Prophecies concerning Jesus fall into four categories.

His first coming only.

Micah 5:2

"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity." (NASB)

His second coming only.

Isaiah 63:1-6

"Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come.

I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.” (NASB95)

Both comings.

Zechariah 9:9–10

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.” (NASB95)

When we see both comings in a single section, we get introduced to the mountain top ...”category of prophecies includes verses that blend the First and Second Comings together in such a way as to negate or conceal the period of time in between. It becomes necessary to study other parallel Scriptures in order to see the distinction.” (Fruchtenbaum 1998, 11)

It is called Mountain Top because the prophet is being given a vision or seeing actual action on one mountain top, or looking up towards it, they can also see it on another mountain top in the distance. But they have no idea what is in between.

The prophets could see the two comings of Christ.
But they could not see the space in between.
Jesus gives us a great example of this.

Luke 4:14–21

“And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.” And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” (NASB95)

The section of scripture that Jesus was reading from was from the scroll of Isaiah. Jesus stopped at a specific point, the point where the prophecy flipped from the First Coming to the Second Coming.

Since Jesus was reading from the Septuagint, lets do the same.

Isaiah 61:1–8

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, on account of which he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to heal those who are crushed in heart, to announce release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of repayment, to comfort all who mourn, to give to those who mourn in Zion glory instead of ashes, the anointing of cheer to those who mourn, a garment of glory instead of a spirit of weariness. And they will be called generations of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for glory. And they will build eternal deserts; they will raise up those that had formerly been deserted, and they will renew deserted cities that have been deserted for generations. Strangers will come tending your sheep, and foreigners will be your plowmen and vine dressers. But you will be called priests of the Lord, ministers of God. You will devour the

strength of nations, and you will be amazed at their wealth. So they will inherit the earth a second time, and eternal cheer will be upon their head. For I am the Lord who loves righteousness and hates the spoils from wrongdoing, and I will give their labor to the righteous, and I will establish an eternal covenant with them.” (Lexham Press 2020, Is 61:1-8)

Jesus stopped exactly where the prophecy regarding His first coming stopped. Isaiah was viewing two mountain tops, just like we were discussing. What is in the valley that the prophets could not see?

Colossians 1:25–27

“Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (NASB95)

Ephesians 3:1–7

“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.” (NASB95)

The valley is what we call the Church Age.

At a point in time, when the fullness of the time of the Gentiles is done, when the last church believer is saved, then we leave the valley. Daniel will deal more with that.

Romans 11:25–29

“For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.” “THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.” From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” (NASB95)

God is not done with the nation of Israel.

The clock stopped at Daniel’s 69th week, more on that.

The church did not replace Israel.

The church did not take over the promises of Israel.

We are the bride of Christ and He is busy preparing a place for us.

Back to Messianic prophecy

Once we understand the significance of what is in the Old Testament regarding Messiah, we will know, beyond any doubt, that what He says about His second coming, will happen, exactly as He says. We will also be able to provide the gospel, the Good News of Messiah, from the Old Testament.

Oh yes, the fourth category of Messianic prophecy.

Prophecy that provides for the entire redemptive career of Messiah

Psalm 110

“A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.” Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew. The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country. He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head.” (NASB95)

Daniel is also looking from Mountain Top to Mountain Top with the fourth beast. We will see more of that as we move on in chapter 7.

The chronology of the vision is such that Daniel has witnessed these four beasts and the last one having ten horns, trampling everything and then another horn rising and supplanting three horns.

Because of the actions of this fourth kingdom, we see the Divine Council preparing to meet. There are multiple thrones set up and in comes the Ancient of Days, YAHWEH, God the Father, and the picture comes to us clearly. This fourth kingdom, specifically the little horn, demands a response from the Divine Council.

Revelation 13 provides more information to the picture we begin to see in Daniel

Daniel 7:9–10

“As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.” (ESV)

Revelation 13:1–8

And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear’s, and its mouth was like a lion’s mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?” And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. (ESV)

Satan himself empowers the little horn who we learn in Revelation 13 is also referred to as the beast

Revelation 17:12–14

“And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.” (ESV)

The little horn of Daniel 7 is the beast of Revelation 13 and 17. He is also referred to as the lawless one.

2 Thessalonians 2:1–4

“Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.” (ESV)

John has another name for him - antichrist

1 John 4:2–3

“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.” (ESV)

Back to our chronology of the courtroom,
The Divine Council has assembled because of the four kingdoms but more specifically because of the last half of the fourth empire.

It should be observed that the ten horns were there at the same time and, therefore, the kings/kingdoms being spoken of are in existence at the same time. (Benware 2018, Kindle Location 2541 - 2542)

In addition, this is a world ruling empire.

The idea of this being the EU is probably self-limiting because in Revelation 13:3 it says the whole earth marveled, this is global rule, global domination.

We see the decision of the court and the beast is killed and given over to fire.

Revelation 19:20

“And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.” (ESV)

The one thing we also saw in the scripture from Revelation 17 is that, when John wrote, the ten horns had not yet received authority, it was something relegated to the future.

Daniel 7:13–14

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” (ESV)

To ancient people all over the Mediterranean, Israelite or not, the “one who rides the clouds” was a deity—his status as a god was unquestioned. Consequently, any figure to whom the title was attributed was a god. (Heiser 2015, 251)

This imagery was part of Baal worship and to show that YAHWEH is God, not Baal, the Holy Spirit led the old testament authors to purloin the term.

In the mythological texts of Ras Shamra the god Baal repeatedly gets the epithet *rkb 'rpt*. It is rendered with slight nuances as ‘Rider of the Clouds’, ‘Rider on the Clouds’, ‘Who mounts the Clouds’. (Herrmann 1999, 704)

A plurality of thrones is clearly described in the vision. Contrary to the view that the plurality is incidental since only one individual is seated for judgment, or the rabbinical interpretation that the plurality here denoted one throne for God and another for David, the text clearly states that it was the council that was

collectively seated along with the Ancient of Days. The setting of this meeting of the divine council is apparently in heaven, but these thrones are not located in clouds. This observation is important since it rules out the idea that the plurality refers to a second throne upon which the "one like a human being" who receives everlasting dominion, was seated. This figure comes with the clouds later in the scene, after the court has already been seated. Although the later tradition that has the "one like a human being" occupying an elevated throne in heaven is logical, having been drawn on the basis of this figure's reception of everlasting rule, the text never states that this individual was seated. Rather, this figure is brought before the Ancient of Days, apparently by some of the "thousand thousands" who were "serving" the enthroned sovereign, who in turn bestowed everlasting dominion upon the "one like a human being." This division of status among these heavenly beings is subtle, but significant. Just as in Ugaritic and earlier canonical Hebrew literature, Daniel 7 describes a hierarchy of an upper tier of beings (those seated in council), a servant class of heavenly beings, and a vice-regent who is given authority over the earth and, by extension, over all the sons of God who were thought to rule the earth in light of Psalm 82:1,6 and Deuteronomy 4:19-20; 32:8-9. (Heiser, *The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Non-Canonical Second Temple Jewish Literature*, PhD Dissertation 2004)

Deuteronomy 33:26

"There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty." (ESV)

Psalms 68:32-33

"O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God; sing praises to the Lord, Selah to him who rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens; behold, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice." (ESV)

Psalms 104:1-4

"Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire." (ESV)

Isaiah 19:1

"An oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt; and the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them." (ESV)

The literary tactic made a theological statement. The effect was to "displace" or snub Baal and hold up Yahweh as the deity who legitimately rode through the heavens surveying and governing the world. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition 2015, 252)

Revelation 5:1-8

"Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." (ESV)

1 Timothy 2:5-6

"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time." (ESV)

Jesus Christ appears before the Father and receives ruling authority, dominion, in His role as Messiah.

It is in the first phase of the eternal kingdom (the Millennial/Messianic aspect) that the Son is preeminent. When the one-thousand-year Messianic kingdom is completed, then the Son will turn ruling authority back to the Father (cf. 1 Cor. 15:23-28). But this Messianic phase of the eternal kingdom of God is necessary to fulfill the covenant commitments made by God to Abraham and his descendants. (Benware 2018, Kindle Locations 2683-2685)

Hebrews 8:1–2

“Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.” (ESV)

Romans 8:15–17

“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.” (ESV)

Stop and think, because of what Jesus did on the cross, believers are the adopted children of YAHWEH. We are joint heirs with Jesus. When you understand that in the ancient middle east, ruling was a family business, then you begin to understand what this means.

Daniel 7:15–22

“As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. ‘These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’ Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions. As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.” (ESV)

Here Daniel added particulars not previously indicated in his recital of the vision, namely, the bronze claws, the fact that the little horn was stronger than the other horns, that this little horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them (cf. Rev. 11: 7; 13: 7), and that judgment was given to the saints. (J. Walvoord 2012, 213)

Apparently before being judged, the fourth beast makes war with the holy ones on earth and defeats them.

Revelation 6:9–11

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. (ESV)

Daniel 7:23

“Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces.’” (ESV)

...the fourth beast represents the fourth kingdom, which will be different from the preceding kingdoms and will be worldwide in its sway. In the process, it will tread down and break in pieces the preceding kingdoms. (J. Walvoord 2012, 214)

Daniel receives the following explanation regarding the fourth beast. It signifies a fourth kingdom, which would be different from all the preceding, and would eat up and destroy the whole earth. "The whole earth is the οἰκουμένη," the expression, without any hyperbole, for the "whole circle of the historical nations" (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 650)

Daniel 7:24–25

"As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time." (ESV)

It is God's people Israel that are the target of this successful persecution, though this does not mean that believing gentiles will escape the wrath of the Antichrist. But the emphasis in this book of Daniel is on "Daniel's people" Israel as the objects of God's favor and the Enemy's disfavor (cf. Dan. 9:20, 24; 12:1). This triumph over the "saints" takes place after the "little horn" has grown to be the largest of the horns. (Benware 2018, Kindle Locations 2746 - 2749)

John shows us this is also applicable to tribulation believers as well as the nation of Israel.

Revelation 13:7–8

"Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain." (ESV)

When does verse 24 happen?

Revelation 6:1–4

"Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer. When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword." (ESV)

The first seal judgement takes place at the beginning of the tribulation period.

If in fact Revelation 6:2 is speaking of the same thing as Daniel 7:24, then the forming of this western confederacy of nations takes place only after the start of the tribulation. And if that is the case then the signing of the covenant between the Antichrist and Israel, which is the event that starts the tribulation (see discussion of Daniel 9:27), is between Israel and the Antichrist when he is the ruler of a single nation only. (Benware 2018, Kindle Locations 2775-2778)

By verse 25 though, obviously by the mid-point of the tribulation, we see this evil one, speaking against the Most High.

It denotes that he would use language by which he would set God aside, regard and give himself out as God; (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 650)

Attacking the Jews, and will try to alter God's times and laws.

“Times and laws” are the foundations and main conditions, emanating from God, of the life and actions of men in the world. The sin of the king in placing himself with God, therefore, as Kliefoth rightly remarks, “consists in this, that in these ordinances he does not regard the fundamental conditions given by God, but so changes the laws of human life that he puts his own pleasure in the place of the divine arrangements.” (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 650-651)

In other words, he holds himself out to be god but for a period of 3 ½ years.

Daniel 7:26–28

“But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.” (ESV)

In response, the divine council (“court”) holds session—the assembly Daniel is witnessing—to deal with (destroy) the fourth beast. The result of that meeting in verse 27 is that the kingdom is given to “the nation of the holy ones of the Most High.” (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition 2015, 256-257)

Psalms 2:1–12

“Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!” He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying, “But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.” “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ” Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!” (NASB95)

With simplicity, but real clarity, the heavenly interpreter declares that the destruction of this evil empire will be followed by the establishing of the kingdom of God. (Benware 2018, Kindle Locations 2839-2840)

Revelation 7:13–17

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” (ESV)

Vast crowds will watch the judgment of a beast that has eliminated millions. Justice will not only be done: justice will be seen to be done, by the men and women who were victims of injustice on earth. They shall suffer no more. They have been resurrected to stand before the throne of God. (Lennox 2015, 238)

For Daniel, he was alarmed. He has seen judgement played out in the future and his people being subjected to the antichrist/little horn.

It would appear that Daniel is saying that the final form of government will be a world government of hideous strength, overtly and maximally hostile towards God. (Lennox 2015, 246-247)

Revelation 4:1–4

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.” Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.” (NASB95)

Some time has passed since John received the dictation of the letters from Jesus in chapters 2 and 3. The embedded outline of the book, in Revelation 1:19, has now moved to the third phase.

John has completed writing the letters dictated by Jesus, again, they were actual churches existing in Asia Minor at the time the letters were dictated, they show us that examples of each of the churches have existed throughout the entire church age which began in Acts 2.

We also know that each church showed us the characteristics of periods of church history.

As scripture showed us in the Old Testament, there is a pattern that repeats in church history as revealed by Jesus in His letters. The pattern is like what took place in Genesis, twice, as well as the history of the nation of Israel, twice.

The pattern is starting out well and seeing corruption take place over time.

As much as we want to believe that the moment, we turn to Christ everything will move upward, even in our individual lives we see that sanctification can move forward and backwards depending on our spiritual health at the time. Paul knew this and was paranoid about finishing well.

1 Corinthians 9:24–27

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” (NASB95)

All we need to do is look around us and we see the ruined ministries of those who have drifted away or failed. Moses blew it, so did Aaron, Joshua finished well. The author of the book of Hebrews was concerned about this and laid out for us how to finish well.

Hebrews 3:7–19

“Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED Me BY TESTING Me, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, ‘THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS’; AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, ‘THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.’” Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, while it is said, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME.” For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.” (NASB95)

In these last days, this is a serious problem. Living consistent lives for Jesus Christ is our goal and do this, we again look to Paul.

Romans 12:1–3

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.” (NASB95)

2 Timothy 4:1–8

“I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (NASB95)

Jesus also dealt with that as He dictated the seven letters, He referenced true believers as overcomers and that there were certain characteristics and promises for those who are faithful believers.

1 John 5:4–5

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (NASB95)

Overcomers

Revelation 2:7

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.” (NASB95)

Revelation 2:11

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.” (NASB95)

Revelation 2:17

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.” (NASB95)

Revelation 2:26–28

“He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star.” (NASB95)

Revelation 3:5

“He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” (NASB95)

Revelation 3:12

“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.” (NASB95)

Revelation 3:21

“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” (NASB95)

Revelation 21:7–8

“He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (NASB95)

As we enter this next section of Revelation, we will see overcomers and earth dwellers. There is no indication of time having passed between chapter 3 and chapter 4, all we know is that John starts off with “after these things...”

Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον – meta tauta eidon – After these things I looked.

After what things?

Chapter 2 and 3 have been all about the churches, all about the types of churches and all about the church age.

This expression is most important, as we shall find throughout the book. It may mean merely a new vision, or a new phase of a vision, as in chapter 7:9. But in view of chapter 1:19, the use of the phrase in 4:1 is quite indicative of a change from the church matters of chapters 2 and 3 to an entirely different scene and subject. (Newell 1935, 90)

Many scholars do not believe this phrase is significant, they say it is simply a transition from one part of the vision to another, but I think there is more to this.

Here μετὰ τοῦτα refers to the vision of 1:12 ff. (καὶ ἐπιστρέψας εἶδον κτλ.) which, with the messages to the Churches arising out of it, has occupied the first three chapters. The vision of the glorified Christ walking among the Churches on earth is followed by a vision of the Court of Heaven. (Swete 1906, 65)

Again, looking at the term “after these things I looked” the things examined by John in the second portion of the outline from Revelation 1:19, were “the things which are,” specifically the things dealing with the church.

The term ἐκκλησία (ecclesia) which means the church, shows up 19 times in the first 3 chapters of Revelation. This term for the church does not show up again until Revelation 22:16, when the entire message of Revelation is being summed up by Jesus.

The church is depicted as being on earth in the first three chapters, but nowhere to be seen on earth in the rest of the book.

Looking at the addresses to the churches, therefore, as depicting the phases of the professing church during the present dispensation, the meaning of the words would be, “The things which must come to pass after the history of the Church is ended.” If, then, such an interpretation of the two previous chapters is correct, the time we have reached is clearly enough defined. (Grant 2005, 26)

Just as we do not know how long it was between John writing the dictated portions of chapters 1-3 and then picking back up with chapter 4, hours?, days? We do not know. We also do not know the length of time that the churches, described in chapters 2 and 3, will take before the events of chapter 4 begin

The scene changes suddenly. We are no longer on earth but are transported into heaven. The true church is gone and the apostate Church, while still on earth to pass into the judgments of the great tribulation, is no longer owned by the Lord and, therefore, not mentioned. That is why the word “church” disappears entirely from the book after the third chapter. (Gaebelein 2009, 223)

So, John, after having been the channel used by Jesus to communicate to the churches of today, is introduced to something entirely new.

Revelation 4:1

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.” (NASB95)

John looked and he saw ἰδοῦ, “Behold (ἰδου [idou]). Exclamation of vivid emotion as John looked.” (Robertson 1933, Re 4:1)

In John’s experience up to this point in his life, he had already seen some amazing things, people raised from the dead, a man walking on the water, Jesus revealed in all His glory and then Jesus crucified. He also out ran Peter in a foot race in order to confirm the empty tomb and saw the resurrected Jesus. He saw Jesus ascend to the the Father and he also saw the tongues of fire descend on the disciples at the birth of the church in Acts 2.

But now he is seeing something he has never seen before and it winds up being expressed in the form of the Greek word he uses. He sees a door, standing open, providing access to the 3rd heaven. In the book, just two verses before, he talks about a door that Jesus was standing next to and knocking on, but this door has been thrown open.

2 Corinthians 12:1–4

“Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven. And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows— was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.” (NASB95)

The term “third heaven” doubtless refers to the dimensional plane from which it is possible to visit various points in earth time. What did Paul see there? He says that he can’t tell us. Probably, he saw parts of the future that the Lord did not want to be common knowledge. But we know that he visited the future, because his epistles speak of future events. In his letters to the Corinthians, the Thessalonians, and Timothy, he speaks of future events with authority, describing the doctrinal dissipation of the latter days. He tells of the debased nature of the last generation. He encourages us with his descriptions of the Rapture of the church. He sees the “son of perdition” sitting in the Temple and calling himself a god. (Stearman 2011, Kindle Location 1367-1372)

As he beheld, he saw a door opened into the very presence of God in heaven. The reference to heaven is not to the atmospheric heavens nor to the starry heavens but to that which is beyond the natural eye which the best of telescopes cannot reveal. This is the third heaven, the immediate presence of God. (J. F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 2008, 102)

About the term, 3rd heaven. Once we understand the way a first century Jew understood the universe, then we understand what this means. The third heaven is the abode of God, Jesus is the door, and here the door is open to John.

A little background on Jewish cosmology.

In the New Testament, the idea of “heaven opened” indicates that the last days have begun (Acts 7:56; 10:11; 2 Cor 12:1–4). (Osborne 2016, 98)

The door is open and then comes the invitation to John from Jesus to come on up. The sound of the voice is like the sound of a trumpet, didn't we see a reference to that voice earlier in Revelation 1:10?

As John arrives at the open door, he hears “a voice like a trumpet,” which as in 1:10 signifies that the last days are here and that the visitation of God has arrived. (Osborne 2016, 98)

So for John, the open-door points to last things, the sound of the trumpet also points to that, he is familiar with what Paul wrote.

1 Corinthians 15:51–58

“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. “O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.” (NASB95)

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (NASB95)

Revelation 4:1

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.”” (NASB95)

That voice like a trumpet is saying “come up here...”

There are some who say this is a picture of the rapture of the church, there are others who say it is an invitation for John alone.

Either view works. I find myself falling in with those who say this is a specific invitation to John as John is in the Spirit, but not translated as Enoch and Elijah were.

I do agree with the view of Doctor Walvoord though in regard to some things that this section of scripture presupposes.

It is clear from the context that this is not an explicit reference to the rapture of the church, as John was not actually translated; in fact he was still in his natural body on the island of Patmos. He was translated into scenes of heaven only temporarily. Though there is no authority for connecting the rapture with this expression, there does seem to be a typical representation of the order of events, namely, the church age

first, then the rapture, then the church in heaven. Though the rapture is mentioned in letters to two of the churches (cf. 2:25; 3:11), the rapture as a doctrine is not a part of the prophetic foreview of the book of Revelation. This is in keeping with the fact that the book as a whole is not occupied primarily with God's program for the church. Instead the primary objective is to portray the events leading up to and climaxing in the second coming of Christ and the prophetic kingdom and the eternal state which ultimately will follow. From a practical standpoint, however, the rapture may be viewed as having already occurred in the scheme of God before the events of chapter 4 and following chapters of Revelation unfold. (J. F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 2008, 103)

Again, the church is not referenced again until Revelation 22:16 and the church is not a participant in the scenes of judgement we will see from this point forward. There are those who are saved during the tribulation period but the "saints who come to know the Lord in this period are described as saved Israelites or saved Gentiles, never by terms which are characteristic of the church, the Body of Christ. Saints mentioned from this point on do not lose their racial background as is commonly done in referring to the church where Jew and Gentile are one in Christ." (J. F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* 2008, 103)

John is invited by Jesus with the same voice that he heard in chapter one, the same voice the church heard as well when He comes for the church, and the door is open and John is also invited in.

The door that John sees is amazing, this door is, in reality, a dimensional time portal. Once John goes through it, he is not only in the heavenlies, he is in the future.

Is time travel possible, yes, the Bible talks about several travelers.

Daniel
Ezekiel
Paul
John

John is invited through this dimensional portal and continues to tell us what he sees and hears. He says he was in the Spirit. There are way too many conjectures with scholars as to what this exactly means. Paul said he did not know if he was in the 3rd heaven in the flesh or in the Spirit. John flat out says he was in the Spirit.

Remember the square they are reporting from, a 1st Century AD, agrarian society in the Roman Empire. I really like how J. A. Seiss talks about as he writes in the mid-nineteenth century.

He tells us that he was called by a mighty voice to come up into heaven, and straightway "became in the Spirit"—in some mysterious, miraculous, ecstatic state, wrought by the power of God—which was, to all intents and purposes, a complete translation from Patmos to the hidden sky. He was not dead; he was not in a mere swoon; he had all his senses entire; his ears heard; his eyes saw; his heart felt; his capacity to weep and to speak continued with him; and the thing was, in all respects, the same as a bodily carrying up to the heavenly sphere, where he found what he was commanded to describe. (Seiss 1901, 237)

Revelation 4:1–2

"After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne." (NASB95)

As John passes through the door, the very first thing he sees is a throne and he sees "One" sitting on the throne.

Now remember, John grew up in a culture that would not even pronounce the name Y__H but instead would say "the Name."

John is immediately thrust into the throne room, and remember, where the throne is, the Divine Council is. He does not describe the details of the throne to us. Solomon made sure we knew what his throne looked like.

1 Kings 10:18–20

“Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with refined gold. There were six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms. Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like it was made for any other kingdom.” (NASB95)

In the scriptures though, we get descriptions of those who see the throne of YHWH and the common thread is there is detail about those around it, but not it specifically.

Isaiah 6:1–4

“In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.” And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.” (NASB95)

Ezekiel 1:26–28

“Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.” (NASB95)

Jeremiah is in the throne room and he says nothing about it, just the conversation and his commissioning.

Jeremiah 1:9

“Then the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me, “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.” (NASB95)

Daniel 7:9–10

“While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His attire was white like snow; the hair of his head was like lamb’s wool. His throne was ablaze with fire and its wheels were all aflame. A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him. The court convened and the books were opened.” (NET)

God’s throne is set, fixed and permanently established in heaven: ‘Behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne’ (v. 2). This throne is a symbol of power, dominion and judgement. It is set, permanently fixed in heaven. This means that God has ruled, is ruling and will rule for ever. His throne is immutably secure (Ps. 93:2). The power and dominion of God’s throne reach to all the ends of the earth. His dominion is everlasting and universal. It extends to all things (Dan. 4:34–35, 37; Isa. 45:7; 46:9–11). (Fortner 2002, 168)

The throne is not empty. There is some One who sits on this great heavenly throne. The throne is a powerful declaration of not merely God’s presence, but of His sovereign, rightful reign, and His prerogative to judge. (Guzik 2013, Re 4:2b)

The first thing that John sees in heaven is a throne. The throne as a symbol occurs more than forty times in Revelation. Three out of four times that it occurs in the NT it is found in Revelation. It symbolizes the absolute sovereignty of God. (Mounce 1997, 119-120)

An alternative translation model for this verse is:

At once God's Spirit took control of me, and I saw there in heaven a throne on which someone was sitting. (Bratcher and Hatton 1993, 88)

Revelation 4:3

"And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance." (NASB95)

We do not get a description of He who is on the throne or a description of the throne itself, but we do get a description of the glory and this we have seen before in accounts of prophets going into the throne room of the universe.

The lack of a scientific terminology among the ancients makes identification of precious and semi-precious stones a somewhat hazardous business. (Morris 1987, 88)

In keeping with John's own theological stance, the awesome scene of God on his throne is the first singular reality of his understanding of divine matters; and also in keeping with this stance John can only describe his appearance in terms of precious stones: jasper and ruby. With this description John is again echoing some Old Testament passages, in this case Exodus 28:17–20 and Ezekiel 1:26, having to do with the breastplate of the high priest. It is probably significant that in the Exodus passage these are the first and last of the twelve stones mentioned in the description, and that both of them are red. At the same time, jasper in particular anticipates the final visions in chapters 21:1–22:5, where it is mentioned three times, as the primary color of the New Jerusalem. (Fee 2011, 68-69)

Not only stones around the throne but a rainbow as well but this rainbow demonstrated different hues of green.

It apparently is a halo of radiant light surrounding the throne, yet also adds the idea of God's covenant with Noah in Genesis 9:13–17, in which God promised he would never again destroy the earth with water. God's glory centers on his deep, abiding love for his creation and his people. The God who dwells "in unapproachable light" (1 Tim 6:16) will redeem his creation and his people. (Osborne 2016, 99)

Revelation 4:4

"Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads." (NASB95)

Who are the elders? Depending on which commentary you read, the following have been conjectured, angels, the church, 24 priests representing the 24 course of priests per Hezekiah, the Apostles and the 12 tribes (but there are really 13,) a special class of ruling Divine Beings.

These elders are seated, clothed in white garments and have golden crowns.

The word for crown here is στεφάνου (stephanos) not diadem. A stephanos is "a wreath made of foliage or designed to resemble foliage and worn by one of high status or held in high regard, wreath, crown. An award or prize for exceptional service or conduct, prize." (Arndt, et al. 2000, 944)

This is the crown of the overcomer, so we see a crown only wearable by a believer .

2 Timothy 4:8

“in the future there is laid up for me the crown (stephanos) of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (NASB95)

James 1:12

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown (stephanos) of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” (NASB95)

Revelation 2:10

“Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown (stephanos) of life.” (NASB95)

About the white clothes.

Revelation 3:5

“He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” (NASB95)

One more thing, these 24 individuals around the throne are called elders. That is never a term used of Divine Beings, it is a term connected with the church though.

The figure 24 is probably taken from 1 Chronicles 24, where David divided the Tribe of Levi into 24 courses to represent the whole. Since the Church is a kingdom of priests, these 24 elders represent the Church as a whole. This actually provides a fourth clue to the fact that the 24 elders represent the Church and not angels.

Hence, from these four clues, the 24 elders must represent the Church saints. If this is true, then they provide further evidence for a pretribulational Rapture. The Church is already in Heaven in chapters four and five before the Tribulation begins in chapter six. It fits well in the chronological sequence provided by the Revelation. Chapters two and three viewed the Church on earth with a promise in 3:10 that the Church will be kept from the very time of the Tribulation. In chapter four, the Church is in Heaven, and so the promise of 3:10 has been kept. The fact that these 24 elders are wearing these stephanos crowns also shows that the events described in chapters four and five occur after the Judgment Seat of Messiah but before the Marriage of the Lamb. (Fruchtenbaum, *The Footsteps of the Messiah: A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events*, Rev. ed. 2003, 165)

John has been invited through a time dimensional portal and moved forward into time to a period that is after the rapture of the church but prior to the marriage supper of the lamb. He is observing the same events that Daniel observed in Daniel 7 and providing much more detail. We are observing the reconstituted Divine Council with new membership...the redeemed in their newly glorified bodies.

You and I will be there.

Daniel 7:10

“A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him. The court convened and the books were opened.” (NET)

More action in the throne room next week.

Works Cited

- Arndt, William, F. Wilbur Gingrich, Frederick William Danker, and Walter Bauer. 2000. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bateman IV, Herbert W. 2012. "Three Obstacles to Overcome, and Then One." In *Jesus the Messiah: Tracing the Promises, Expectations, and Coming of Israel's King*, by Herbert W. Bateman IV, Darrell L. Bock and Gordon H. Johnston. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic.
- Beale, G. K., and Sean M. McDonough. 2007. "Revelation." In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Benware, Paul. 2018. *Daniel: God's Man with God's Message: An Exegetical and Dispensational Commentary*. Taos, NM: Dispensational Publishing House, Inc.
- Boice, James Montgomery. 2003. *Daniel: An Expository Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Bratcher, Robert G., and Howard Hatton. 1993. *A Handbook on the Revelation to John, UBS Handbook Series*. New York, NY: United Bible Societies.
- Carpenter, Eugene. 2010. *Daniel*. Vol. 9, in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Ezekiel & Daniel*, edited by Philip W. Comfort. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.
- Chisholm, Jr., Robert B. 2002. *Handbook on the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Minor Prophets*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Constable, Tom. 2003. *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*. Galaxie Software.
- Fee, Gordon. 2011. *Revelation, New Covenant Commentary Series*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.
- Fortner, Donald S. 2002. *Discovering Christ in Revelation*. Darlington: Evangelical Press.
- Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. 1998. *Messianic Christology: A Study of Old Testament Prophecy Concerning the First Coming of the Messiah*. Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.
- . 2003. *The Footsteps of the Messiah: A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events, Rev. ed.* Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.
- Gaebelein, Arno C. 2009. *The Annotated Bible, Volume 9: James to Revelation*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.
- Grant, F. W. 2005. *Things That Shall Be*. Galaxie Software.
- Guzik, David. 2013. *Revelation, David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible*. Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.
- Heiser, Michael S. 2004. *The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Non-Canonical Second Temple Jewish Literature, PhD Dissertation*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- . 2015. *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible, First Edition*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- Herrmann, W. 1999. "Rider Upon Clouds." In *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking and Pieter W. van der Horst. Leiden: Brill.
- Hitchcock, Mark. 2012. *The End: A Complete Overview of Bible Prophecy and the End of Days*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
- Ironside, Henry Allan. 1953. *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet, 2nd Edition*. New York, NY: Loizeaux Bros.

- Jeffers, James S. 1999. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Jeremiah, David, and Carole C. Carlson. 1992. *The Handwriting on the Wall*. Dallas, TX: Word Pub.
- Keil, Carl Friedrich, and Franz Delitzsch. 1996. *Commentary on the Old Testament*. Vol. 9. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Lennox, John C. 2015. *Against the Flow: The Inspiration of Daniel in an Age of Relativism*. Oxford: Monarch Books.
- Lexham Press. 2020. *The Lexham English Septuagint, Second Edition*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- McGee, J. Vernon. 1997. *Thru the Bible Commentary, electronic edition*. Vol. 3. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Morris, Leon. 1987. *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Vol. 20. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity press.
- Mounce, Robert H. 1997. *The Book of Revelation, The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Newell, William R. 1935. *The Book of Revelation*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press.
- Osborne, Grant R. 2016. *Revelation: Verse by Verse, Osborne New Testament Commentaries*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- Robertson, A. T. 1933. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.
- Seiss, J. A. 1901. *The Apocalypse: A Series of Special Lectures on the Revelation of Jesus Christ with Revised Text, Eight Edition*. Vol. 1. New York, NY: Charles C. Cook.
- Simpson, Douglas J. 2000. *The Book of Daniel, Clear Study Series*. Nashville, TN: Randall House Publications.
- Stearman, Gary. 2011. *Time Travelers of the Bible: How Hebrew Prophets Shattered the Barriers of Time-Space*. Crane, MO: Defender.
- Swete, Henry Barclay. 1906. *The Apocalypse of St. John, 2d. ed., Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament*. New York, NY: The Macmillan Company.
- Utley, Bob. 2005. *Old Testament Apocalypses: Daniel and Zechariah, Study Guide commentary Series*. Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.
- Walvoord, John. 2012. *Daniel, The John Walvoord Prophecy Commentaries*. Edited by Charles H. Dyer and Philip E. Rawley. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.
- Walvoord, John F. 2008. *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*. Galaxie Software.
- . 2008. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. Galaxie Software.
- Wiersbe, Warren W. 2000. *Be Resolute, "Be" Commentary Series*. Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.