

## The Book of Revelation

### Part 4 of 22

*PW: You're about to watch chapter 4 of this extremely controversial and thorough study of the book of Revelation. This series debunks, once and for all, every argument of the pre-tribulation rapture. So here it is, Pastor Steven Anderson breaks down chapter 4 of the book of Revelation.*

PA: Now Revelation chapter 4 we finished up with the messages to the seven churches. And the Bible says in verse number 1, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne." So if you would, go back quickly to Revelation chapter 1, because if you remember in the introduction to the book of Revelation, John was told by Jesus Christ in verse number 19, "write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which ARE, and the things which shall be HEREAFTER." So notice, he is supposed to write the things that he already saw, and things that ARE, meaning right now, present things, AND the things which shall be hereafter. Now when we get to chapter 4, he says at the end of verse 1, "I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." Now what that tells us is that we have not gotten to the hereafter phase of Revelation until this point, right? Everything he has seen before this point was the things which are, the present day things. It was John, present day, on the Isle of Patmos. It was John, present day, hearing messages to present day churches that were giving them specific instructions about their church. Now in chapter 4 we're getting into the hereafter phase. You say "well, why is that important?" Well, because there is a false teaching out there that says that Revelation chapters 2 and 3 were not just speaking to specific literal churches that existed back then, but they basically teach that Revelation 2 and 3 provide an outline of church history, or that they provide "7 church ages". Now the primary source of this seems to be the Scofield Reference Bible, because in the Scofield Reference Bible, on the messages to the seven churches it says "you know, this was the Ephesus age, the Smyrna age, the Pergamos age". And then of course we will often hear people say that today we are living in the Laodicean church age, because that was the final church that he addressed in Revelation chapter 3. But if that were true, if Revelation 2 and 3 were dealing with these "church ages", well, wouldn't those have all been in the future to John back then? Because if John's living in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, if these letters to the seven churches were giving him information about future events, wouldn't that have been "things that would be hereafter"? But yet, that is classified in the book of Revelation as the "things which ARE", the present day churches. And he doesn't enter the "hereafter" phase of Revelation until he gets to chapter 4. So Revelation 2 and 3 were not prophesying future church ages to John. Rather they were just showing him things about those particular churches. And of course there is other symbolism there. But in chapter 4 we get into the "hereafter" phase. You say "well, why do you make such a big deal to tell us that those seven churches were not "church ages?" Well, because there is a false doctrine out there known as the "pre-tribulation rapture" that basically teaches that Jesus Christ will come in the clouds, and that the trumpet will sound BEFORE the tribulation, and that believers will be removed from this world before the tribulation. Now that is something that the Bible NEVER tells us anywhere. There is NO scripture anywhere in the Bible that clearly states anything even close to that. Therefore, the pre-tribulation rapture crowd- because there is no clear scripture that says "the rapture will come before the tribulation, or before the tribulation Christ comes in the clouds"- they have to use a lot of symbolism, and a lot of very complicated arguments to make their case. So in order to prove that the rapture comes BEFORE the tribulation, and in order to prove that the rapture can happen at any moment- two things that are NOT taught in the Bible whatsoever- one of the things that they do is they try to say "well chapters 2 and 3 are giving us this outline of the history of the church, and giving us these seven church ages, and then RIGHT AFTER that last Laodicean church age, Revelation 4:1 is the rapture." And they're using that to say "well, you know, you have the church history, then you have the rapture, then you have the tribulation." Now, Revelation 4:1 is NOT the rapture, and I'm going to prove to you right now that Revelation 4:1 is not the rapture. The Bible reads in verse number 1, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will

shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit". So those who believe in this false pre-trib rapture... they don't want to say "well, the book of Revelation never mentions the rapture." So they have to find something in the book of Revelation BEFORE the tribulation, if they are going to be able to teach a pre-tribulation rapture, they have to find something before the tribulation. And the pre-tribulation is laid out in chapter 6 first of all. But they have to find something before that and say "this is the rapture". So here is all that they could come up with, was Revelation 4:1. Now it's pretty ridiculous, because they say "well, see? A voice like a trumpet, and come up hither, John is caught up, that's the rapture". Well, here is the problem with that. First of all, this is ONE GUY being caught up to heaven. The rapture is not ONE GUY being caught up to heaven, the rapture is ALL believers of all ages, the dead in Christ, those that are alive and remain, every saint who has ever lived being caught up... It's an innumerable multitude that's going to be caught up at the rapture first of all, not a single guy. Second of all, at the rapture a trumpet will sound. Not "a voice like a trumpet". And whenever the Bible talks about a voice like a trumpet, it's talking about the volume of the voice. Like, for example he tells preachers in Isaiah 58:1, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet." He is saying that he heard a loud voice, when he said that he heard a voice like a trumpet. So there's no trumpet in this verse sounding. There's just a voice that has a volume like a trumpet. So it's one guy, there's no trumpet. There's no mention of Christ coming in the clouds in this verse whatsoever. You see, when John is caught and gets to heaven, Jesus is up there, seated at the right of the Father. There's no Christ descending, coming in the clouds, us meeting him in the air... No mention here of John meeting the Lord in the air, okay? So one guy, no trumpet, no clouds, no Jesus Christ coming to gather, we don't see ANY of that in this passage. But here's the one thing that just proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that this can have nothing to do with the rapture. Verse 2. "And immediately I was in the spirit". Therefore, John was not even bodily or physically caught up to heaven in Revelation 4:1. And at the rapture, there will be a BODILY resurrection of the dead in Christ, and we which are alive and remain will be BODILY caught up to meet him, we will be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. We will receive a new glorified body. But look, the rapture is not a spiritual occurrence. It is a BODILY, PHYSICAL occurrence where we are caught up to heaven. So really this passage has pretty much nothing to do with the rapture. Pretty much has nothing in common with the rapture. No trumpet, no clouds, no Lord descending, no bodily catching up, and it's one guy verses an innumerable multitude. You see, there are other scriptures in the Bible that talk about people being carried somewhere, or brought somewhere in the spirit. For example, back in Ezekiel 37:1 says "the hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out, IN THE SPIRIT of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones." He did not physically go there, but he was brought there in spirit. Have you ever heard people say to you, "you know what, I know I can't be a such and such an event, but I'll be with you in spirit!" Right? "I'm with you in the spirit." A lot of times, men in the Bible would go into a trance, or have a vision from the Lord, or be carried in the spirit somewhere. But honestly, they stayed where they were physically. Sometimes they were in a jail cell for example. But, they're caught up in the spirit, and they're brought to places where they are shown different things. Ezekiel was brought to the temple and shown people that were bowing down and worshipping idols in Ezekiel 8, 9 and 10, we see that drama there. And this shows in Revelation 4:2 that John was not bodily caught up to heaven, he was only caught up in the spirit. And so to say that this is the rapture is a big stretch. And what I think is funny about that, is that those who believe in the pre-trib rapture, they always claim that they use the "literal" interpretation of the Bible. You know, "WE interpret the Bible literally!" And here is what they often accuse anyone who does not agree with their dispensational doctrine and their pre-trib doctrine, they'll say this... "well, those who are not dispensationalists, they will often tend to spiritualise events in the Bible, and they tend to spiritualise scriptures". Who is "spiritualising"? They are the ones who are taking a scripture about John, one guy being caught up to heaven, and saying "oh, this SPIRITUALLY represents ALL BELIEVERS being caught up BODILY, trumpet sound, Christ in the clouds..." It's a BIG BIG stretch, but, if you believe in a pre-trib rapture, this is all you've got! Because when we get into chapter 6, the tribulation is already happening. And the only thing they can point to that's pre-trib, is Revelation 4:1. So if you can swallow that this is the ONLY mention of the rapture in the WHOLE BOOK OF REVELATION, 1 verse about John being caught up in the spirit... if you can swallow that my friend, you're a good candidate for believing in the pre-trib rapture. If you can swallow that, then you can swallow all the other garbage that you're going to have to swallow in order to believe in the pre-trib rapture. But, frankly, I'm not buying it. It doesn't make any sense. Let's show you the real rapture in the

book of Revelation, because- oh, make no mistake about it, the rapture is definitely covered in the book of Revelation. It's covered twice. It's covered in chapter 7 as being after the tribulation but before God's wrath is poured out, and it's also covered in chapter 14, as being AFTER the tribulation, but before God's wrath is poured out. So, let's compare shall we? The pre-trib position of the rapture, which is Revelation 4:1, and let's compare that with the post-trib, pre-wrath rapture, basically a biblical rapture. Let's look at those in Revelation 7 and Revelation 14. Go to chapter 7 first of all, and let's compare and see which one looks more like the rapture. Look at Revelation 7, and keep in mind the context of Revelation 7 is that at the very end of chapter 6, the sun and moon have just been darkened, at the end of chapter 6. Well, if we go to Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, what happens right after the sun and moon are darkened, according to Matthew 24:29-31? He says "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light", and then he says "THEN shall they see the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory." He says there is a trumpet, he is going to gather the ELECT, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. So look, if Matthew 24 and Mark 13, and Luke 21 teach that AFTER the tribulation Christ comes in the clouds, a trumpet sounds and the elect, or the saved are gathered- "elect" always means "saved" in the New Testament... If Matthew 24 and Mark 13 teach that the rapture takes place AFTER the sun and moon are darkened, AFTER the tribulation, then when we are reading Revelation, and when we see the sun and moon darkened in chapter 6, shouldn't we expect the next thing to be the rapture? I mean if Matthew 24 teaches -sun and moon are darkened, then Christ comes in the clouds, and the elect are gathered- wouldn't we expect to find in Revelation, right after the sun and moon are darkened, the rapture? Well that's what exactly what we find in chapter 7. Look at chapter 7, verse 9. "AFTER THIS", after what? After the sun and moon were darkened at the end of chapter 6 and the 144, 000 were sealed... "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number"- Now isn't that a little more like the rapture than one guy, John? "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." So right after the sun and moon are darkened, we have a great multitude appear in heaven that no man could number. Now, I'm going to prove to you that those people just got there, because first of all, he tells us in verse 9, "AFTER THIS, I beheld and lo, a great multitude". So the great multitude was not there until AFTER the sun and moon were darkened, and AFTER the 144,000 are sealed. But then he says this in verse 13, "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" Well, "whence", the word "whence" is an old word, but it means "from where". So he says "what are these which are arrayed in white robes? And from where came they? Whence came they?" Basically in our modern vernacular, "where did they come from?" Showing that they just showed up. After this, a multitude shows up, and one of the 24 elders says to John "where did these people come from? Who are they and where did they come from?" "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest." He's like, "don't ask me! You should know!" And what does the elder say? Verse 14, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." So when we compare Revelation 7 to the rapture, it's a much better fit, because in Revelation 7, it's a great multitude that appears in heaven, they've come out of great tribulation which is consistent with Matthew 24, which teaches that AFTER the tribulation is when Christ comes in the clouds, the trumpet sounds and the believers are caught up, are gathered together. And then in 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4 when it talks about the rapture coming in the clouds just like Matthew 24, trumpet sounds, gather up the saved, caught up together with him in the clouds. There's this phrase in 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." And that's exactly what this passage teaches in Revelation 7 when it says "the lamb which is in the midst of the

throne shall feed them and shall lead them”, and it says “they will serve him day and night”. You see this multitude that’s caught up in Revelation 7? They’re going to EVER be with Jesus. They’re EVER going to be with the lamb, they’re EVER going to be with the Lord. Now let me ask you this. Let’s compare that with Revelation 4:1. One guy... Did he remain EVER with Jesus? Ever with the Lord? Or was he caught up TEMPORARILY? Think about it now. He was caught up temporarily, and then shortly thereafter, he’s back on the Isle of Patmos, he’s copying out his letter to send to the seven churches. John was only caught up temporarily. We’re going to stay with Jesus! And when Jesus comes back to this earth, after he is done pouring out his wrath, we’re coming with him. And we’re going to reign with him. We will stay with Jesus Christ from the rapture on, we will be with the Lord, EVER with the Lord. Always with the Lord. So Revelation 7 is a PERFECT fit for the rapture, because it’s an innumerable multitude, because it’s AFTER the sun and moon are darkened, because it’s after the tribulation. Because it’s exactly what we read about in all the descriptions of Christ coming in the clouds. Later in this series I’ll explain more about the order of the book of Revelation. In chapters 11 and 12, in those messages, I am going to go into more detail about the order, because the book of Revelation is in Chronological order, make no mistake about that. Because he often uses the term “after this”, or “after these things”, but it’s just that chapters 1 through 11 are in Chronological order. Then in chapter 12, He starts over with the birth of Christ, and he tells the whole story again. So basically, if you cut the book of Revelation in half, both halves are in Chronological order. But he just goes through the whole story twice. Sort of like the way he goes through the gospel story 4 times in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But again, I’ll go into more detail proving that in chapters 11 and chapter 12 sermons. But, for now, just realise that both of these places I am showing you are post-tribulational but pre-wrath. They’re both AFTER the tribulation but BEFORE god pours out His wrath, both chapter 7 and chapter 14. Go to chapter 14, and look if you would at verse 14. Tell me if this seems more like the rapture than Revelation 4:1. “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man”, that’s Jesus Christ of course, the Son of man is what he was called on this earth. “having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.” Now again, perfect fit with the rapture. Jesus Christ comes in a cloud... Jesus Christ is told by the voice of the archangel that the time is come for him to reap. He thrusts in his sickle and reaps the harvest of the earth. Now, we have the cloud, we have Jesus descending, and we have the voice of the archangel, and we have the earth reaped. You say, “what does it mean that earth is reaped?” Well, this goes back to the parable that Jesus gives in Matthew 13 where he explains that the harvest is the end of the world, he said that he that sowed the good seed is the Son of man. He said the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares, or weeds, he says they are the children of the wicked one. And he talks about reaping the harvest and gathering the wheat- or the good seed- into his barn. That “barn” is heaven. The Father’s house. He is bringing the good wheat of the harvest into his barn. You know the Bible often uses the term “harvest” to refer to people being saved. He talks about the fact that we should lift up our eyes and behold that the fields are white unto HARVEST, and that we should pray that the Lord would send forth LABOURERS into his harvest. To go out and do what? Get people saved, preach the gospel to every creature. And he often refers to that as planting seeds, watering seeds, reaping the harvest. So Jesus Christ, when he comes in the cloud here, he reaps the harvest of the earth, this is where he is gathering up the saved from the earth, he is gathering the wheat into his barn. And THEN, perfect fit, jump to chapter 15. Right after this, right after it’s reaped... And of course after he reaps the wheat there, then he also reaps the clusters of the vine of the earth and casts them into the great winepress of the wrath of God, symbolic of him pouring out his wrath on those that are left behind to experience God’s wrath. But in chapter 15 it says this in verse 2. “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty” and on and on, they sing the song. But again, it’s a perfect fit. Jesus comes in the clouds, he reaps and what do you see next? A multitude in heaven, singing and praising God. Those are the people that were just raptured. That’s the same multitude from chapter 7. It’s a perfect fit. It fits Matthew 24, it fits Mark 13, it fits Luke 21, it fits 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4 and 5. And the pre-trib rapture is just constantly trying to jam a square peg into a round hole, trying to say that Revelation 4:1 is the rapture. When

once you get a view that says it's post-trib, pre-wrath... everything fits like a glove as you study revelation. And I've talked to a lot of people... Go back to Revelation 4 if you would... I've talked to a lot of people that said "man I used to not like studying Revelation because it never made any sense to me. But once I figured out that the rapture happens AFTER the tribulation, and that it's pre-wrath, that it's before the wrath, but after the tribulation..." They said "man, it just all made sense, it just all came clear. Now I love reading it, now it's interesting! It makes perfect sense now!" And that's how it is with any doctrine. I mean whenever you are struggling to understand something in the Bible, it's usually just because you have a pre-conceived idea that you can't get out of your head, and because you can't get that pre-conceived idea out of your head, everything isn't fitting and it's confusing you and bothering you. Just let go of it man. Just read the Bible and take it for what it says. Read Matthew 24 and just believe it. But again, where we are in Revelation 4, we saw John is SPIRITUALLY caught up into heaven, not bodily. And it says that he sees a throne set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, verse 3. "And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." So he gets up there and he sees this scene there is a throne, there's one sitting upon the throne, obviously that's the Lord sitting on the throne. And he's surrounded by four and twenty seats, with four and twenty elders. Now you say "what are these elders?". Go to Titus chapter 1. Titus chapter number 1 will help us to understand what the Bible means by the term "elder". The Bible reads in Titus 1, verse 5. "For this cause", this is Paul speaking to Titus, "left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting", or "lacking" there, "and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee". So Paul left Titus in Crete to ordain elders in every city as he had appointed. Look at verse 6. "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife" And no that does not mean one wife at a time. "The husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God". So notice, we're talking about ordaining what in verse 5? What are we seeing ordained in verse 5? ELDERS in every city, right? And then what does he call them in verse 7? For a... What? A BISHOP must be blameless. So doesn't that show that an elder is a bishop? Because he is talking about ordaining elders and then he says "here are the qualifications of a BISHOP". So he uses the term "elder" and "bishop" interchangeably. The word that we most often use today in our modern vernacular is... we call them "pastors". But there is nothing wrong with using the term "elder" or "bishop" to talk about someone who is leading the church. And the leaders in the church are known as "bishops" or "elders", and they are served by deacons. And that's a whole other sermon in and of itself. But here we see that the bishop or the pastor is called an "elder", so when we get to Revelation chapter 4, it makes perfect sense that these 24 elders are basically 24 pastors, 24 church leaders. 24 preachers or prophets or men of God. Now, you say "why 24? Who are these guys?" Of course those who believe in a pre-trib rapture say "well the 24 elders represent EVERY believer, the entire church". Well first of all, that's not a very good representation, since they're all men. Aren't there a lot of women that are saved? But there aren't any female pastors, least there shouldn't be, according to the Bible. It's hard to be "the husband of one wife" when you're a woman. So that proves right there that Pastors are supposed to be men. But anyway, the 24 elders are all men. No women represented there. The 24 elders are all Pastors. There is no laymen represented there. Do you see how that is not a good representation? Because they say "well, THIS represents the entire "church". This is all believers in heaven". Because again, they're trying to prove that the rapture has already taken place. So they say "well this just represents..." Look, what was more like the rapture? The multitude in chapter 7 that no man could number of every nationality? Or 24 guys? Now, you say "well, Pastor Anderson, how did these 24 Pastors get to heaven if the rapture hasn't happened yet, hmmmmmm? How did they get there?" Well, newsflash! Every person who has ever DIED is already in heaven, and the rapture hasn't happened yet. Believers are already in heaven right now. But these 24 elders have not been bodily resurrected yet, they're there in soul and spirit. You say "no Pastor Anderson, because they are clothed in white raiment. Can a soul wear clothing? Can a spirit wear clothing?" Yes it can, go to Revelation 6, I'll prove it to you. Look at Revelation 6:11. The Bible says, well, let's start reading in verse number 9. It says "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the"- what? "the SOULS", this is BEFORE the rapture. He says "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the

testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Now that verse just proves so much right there. That proves that the first four seals have NOT been God judging the earth at all, or avenging the blood of the saints on the earth. People try to say "oh yeah, the fourth seal is the wrath of God". NO! Because at the fifth seal, they're saying "how long, God, until you START pouring out your wrath? How long UNTIL you judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." Proving that He hasn't done that yet. Because He is not going to do that until the end of chapter 6, AFTER the sun and moon are darkened, proving that God's wrath does not begin until AFTER the sun and moon are darkened. Proving that the wars and famines and pestilences of the first four seals had nothing to do with God's wrath or God's judgement, or God's vengeance. That was all man-made, that was all Satan persecuting the people upon the earth, and persecuting humanity and then persecuting God's people. We will get into that later when we get into chapter 6 in detail. But look at these men that are martyrs to the cause of Christ, that are being killed and look what they say in verse 11. It says "And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." So notice, these martyrs, the souls... They're not there BODILY. They are dying and boom, they're soul is in heaven. Look the Bible says "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Paul said "(I have) a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better", he said "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, because if I die, I'm going to be with Christ." We don't believe in "soul sleep", we're not Jehova's (false) witnesses. You know, the Bible teaches that when you go to heaven, the first thing you are issued is a white robe. You know, you get there in the soul, even before the rapture, even before the bodily resurrection, and you are given a white robe. So why should it surprise us that if these people, AS THEY'RE KILLED, are instantly appearing in heaven in Revelation 6- their soul that is, their dead body is still on the earth- why would it surprise us in chapter 4 when we have got a bunch of Pastors up there in white raiment? Now who are these elders, who are these 24 elders? Well personally, I believe that this would be a privilege to be one of these guys. I think this is where you would want to be. I mean, there have been thousands and thousands of Pastors throughout history, haven't there? But man alive, there is only going to be 24 that are seated right around that throne. And I'll tell you right now, these guys are glad that they're there. I mean that is a position of great honour, to be that close to the throne and to be in these... So what I believe is that these are 24 great men of God, and I believe that they span throughout history. Men who have somehow shown their love for God, and their service for God to the point where He is allowing them to be in this privileged group. He is rewarding them by allowing them to be in this elite group of 24 elders. Now, I wouldn't even think to try to attain to that, but man, it would be great. It's probably something that every Pastor could strive toward and think about. Wow, maybe I could be a great man and reach that point where I could be honoured in that way or in some other way. But these elders are obviously very great men of God, they are human beings, they are men who have served God on the earth, and they were rewarded by being in this elite group in chapter 4. So it says these 24 elders are sitting in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold, look at verse 5. "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." Now the seven spirits of God are mentioned a lot in Revelation. They're mentioned in chapter 1, chapter 2, chapter 3. But look if you would at Isaiah chapter 11. I believe that this is what God is referring to when he says "the seven spirits of God". Because people have often asked me, "what are the seven spirits of God, what does that mean? We know there is the Holy Spirit, but what about these seven spirits? What is that referring to?" And it says that Jesus Christ has the seven spirits of God, in an earlier part of Revelation. But look at Isaiah 11, verse 1. It's about Jesus, and it mentions these seven spirits. Look at verse 1 of Isaiah 11. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord", did you count there? Seven spirits. Let's go through it together. "The spirit or the LORD", that's one. "The spirit of wisdom", "the spirit of understanding", "the spirit of counsel", "the spirit of might", "the spirit of knowledge", and "the spirit of the fear of the LORD". I don't believe that that's coincidence, that a scripture that's prophesying the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ mentions SEVEN different things about his spirit. And gives basically the seven spirits of God. And I believe that that's what that's referring to. Let's go back to Revelation 4, now that we understand that. Look at verse 6. "And before the throne there was a sea

of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Now get this. “They rest not day nor night” saying this. I mean they just say it over and over. “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty”, and then they start it all over again. “Holy, holy, holy...” I mean they’re just CONSTANTLY giving glory and honour and thanks to Him that sits on the throne. I mean all the time. They’re just praising God. They’re just glorifying Him. You can’t glorify Him enough. I mean these four magnificent creatures are just glorifying Him non-stop all the day long. And that’s why the Bible tells us literally hundreds of times, “PRAISE THE LORD”. God is worthy to be praised. He desires man to praise him. He even has these living creatures that are praising Him day and night, before His throne. Now, who are these beasts, these four beasts? Well, these four beasts are what the Bible calls “Seraphims”, okay? You say “what in the world is a Seraph?” Well, the Bible talks about these beings, the Bible here calls them beasts. First of all, ask yourself this question. Does a beast sound like something that a human being would like to be called? I mean if I called a human being a “beast”, and sometimes the Bible does call human beings “beasts”, but whenever He calls a human being a “beast”, it’s derogatory, because He is comparing them unto an animal, when He uses the word “beast”. The word “beast”, usually in the Bible, usually means “animals”. You say “well, are these animals?” Well, they do have certain similarities with animals. I believe that they’re different from animals. Go back to Ezekiel chapter 1. I’m going to shed some light on this for you if I can, who these “living creatures” are, these “beasts” that are in Revelation 4. Now the reason I keep using the term “living creature”, is that when these type of beings are described back in the book of Isaiah, and back in the book of Ezekiel, God uses the word... instead of using the word “beast”, He uses the term “living creature”. And, I think He is using those words because they are not men, they’re definitely not human beings, they are beasts or “living creatures”. I don’t know if “animal” would be the right term, but they are a living creature that is not human, that is not man. And they are also called “angels”, these creatures are sometimes referred to as angels in the bible. Now look if you would at Ezekiel chapter number 1. Look at verse 4. “And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of” - what? “four living creatures.” Now what did we have in Revelation 4? Four beasts right? Well this is four “living creatures”. And it’s the same meaning of the word there. “And this was their appearance. They had the likeness of a man”, but they were not men is what I’m showing you here. “And every one had four faces”, because human beings don’t have four faces do they? “And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.” Now are these creatures EXACTLY the same as what we saw in Revelation 4? No. Because in Revelation 4 the creatures had SIX WINGS each, right? And in Revelation 4 there were four beasts and they each had ONE face that was different from the other. So there were four beasts with four different types of faces. Well these creatures EACH had four faces, and instead of six wings they had four wings. Everybody following me so far? Well, look at the next verse. “And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf’s foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.” So again, not human here. Because human beings don’t have feet like calves feet that go straight down. They have feet that fan out to the front. It said “they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.” Those are the same faces that we saw in Revelation 4, didn’t we? Same exact faces. Well, if we jump down, just for sake of time, we could go through this whole description but we want to save time. But verse 13, living creatures, verse 14 living creatures. But look at verse 18. “As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four.” Do you remember how the beasts in Revelation 4 were full of eyes within? Jump to Ezekiel chapter 10. So we saw that in Ezekiel 1, pretty clear. And it kept using the term over and over again. “The living creatures, the living creatures, the living creatures, the living creatures”, right? Which I believe is equivalent to the New Testament term, the beasts. Look if you would to Ezekiel chapter 10. And instead of calling them “the living creatures”, now he is going to call them something different every time. Verse 1, “Then I looked,

and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the"- what?- "cherubims". And he begins to describe the same thing, but look at verse 3. "Now the cherubims stood..." Verse 4, "Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub". Verse 5, "And the sound of the cherubims' wings". Verse 6, toward the end there. It says "Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims". Look at verse 7. "one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that was between the cherubims". Verse 9. "And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub". And on and on. Just "cherub, cherub, cherub, cherub, cherubims, cherubims", instead of like in chapter 1 where it was just "living creatures, living creatures, living creatures, living creatures." You say "Pastor Anderson, how do you know it's the same creatures?" Look at verse 19. "And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them, and every one stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. THIS IS THE LIVING CREATURE that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims." So according to verse 20, the "living creatures" that he saw in chapter 1, are equivalent to the "cherubims" that he saw in chapter 10. Now you say "well, Pastor Anderson, why does it say cherub, singular, but cherubims, plural? Why does it pick up an I M S on the end?" Well, because in the Hebrew language, plural is often made by putting an "im" on the end of something. That's why you will sometimes see "Baal", singular, where they worship the false god Baal, but then you will see "Baalim", plural, okay? Well, the singular is "cherub", the plural is "cherubims". So basically, "cherubim", singular? That is (actually) not singular, that's plural. So "cherub" singular, "cherubims", plural. Now, go if you would to Isaiah chapter 6. Now here is a theory that's out there, and I'm just throwing this out there... You can do more study and more thought on this. But if you remember... There were four faces mentioned, right? What were those four faces, both in Ezekiel, and in Revelation 4? Well there was the face like a lion, there was the face like a calf, there was the face as a man, and the face like an eagle, and they were given in that order weren't they, in Revelation 4? The lion, the calf, the man, and the eagle. Here's a theory, and I'm not saying that this is certainly true. But if you look at the four gospels... Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, right? Basically, if you think about it, they portray Jesus Christ in various ways. For example, if you look at the book of Matthew, it is geared toward the Jews in the sense that it quotes the Old Testament a lot, it talks a lot about the nation of Israel and so forth, when you are reading the book of Matthew, and so if you think of Jesus Christ in the book of Matthew as being the king of kings... The book of Matthew emphasised Jesus being a KING more than any other book, which is why it gives a genealogy of Jesus Christ from his kingly line, descending from David, Solomon, Rehoboam, all the kings of Judah. So the book of Matthew portrays Jesus as King, and remember, the lion is considered the "king" amongst beasts. And Jesus is referred to as the "lion of the tribe of Judah". And if you look at the book of Matthew, it emphasises that he came from Judah, it emphasises that he is the King of kings, it emphasises that he is come to rule and reign over Israel, he is the king of the Jews and so forth. So that is the most "lion-like" of the four gospels. Jesus Christ coming as the King, which is represented by the lion. Well if you look at the second of the four gospels, Mark, Jesus Christ is emphasised as a servant, okay? He is always doing works. And you'll notice, if you have a red letter Bible, where it shows where Jesus is speaking in red, you'll notice that the book of Mark has the least red letters. Because the book of Mark emphasises Jesus Christ serving, and the WORKS that he is doing, more than the preaching. Obviously there is a lot of preaching in the book of Mark, but it REALLY emphasises his works. And it emphasises him coming as a servant. Because remember Jesus Christ took upon himself the form of a servant? And it says "he made himself of NO REPUTATION, but took upon him the form of a servant". That's why Mark has no genealogy, did you notice that? The book of Mark has no genealogy because he (Jesus Christ) is of no reputation, he is there to serve, he is there to MINISTER, not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. So Matthew portrays Jesus strongly as the King. Mark strongly portrays Jesus Christ as a servant of no reputation. Well, an ox or a calf or a cow is often used in the Bible to represent a beast of burden that just serves and does the work. For example, God compares preachers often, to oxen. He says "thou shalt not muzzle the OX that treadeth out the corn, the labourer is worthy of his hire". So He uses the term "ox" as a symbol of a labourer. As a symbol of a servant, a worker, a minister, a preacher, often throughout the Bible, used to represent these is an ox. So that's basically Jesus Christ as the King, in Matthew, Jesus Christ as the servant, in Mark. Then in Luke, there's a great emphasis on the humanity of Christ. Jesus Christ as a man. And this is emphasised by the fact that instead of a genealogy of his kingly descent, through David, Solomon,



Rehoboam etc... The genealogy in Luke chapter 3 is a descent showing the humanity of Christ. Basically it's Mary's genealogy, it's not Joseph's genealogy, because Jesus was not the son of Joseph, physically of course. He was the Son of God. Jesus had no earthly father. But, he did have an earthly mother. He was the Son of God, but he was also the Son of man. Well, that came through the woman. He was the Son of the woman, he was the Son of the virgin Mary. So when Jesus Christ genealogy in Luke 3 is given, it's his human genealogy. That's why instead of just going back so far like the one in Matthew does... Actually the genealogy in Luke goes all the way back to Adam, right? In Matthew you know, we just go back to Abraham, just showing that he is of the nation of Israel, the Jewish genealogy there. Showing that he is of the kingly line, he is the seed of Abraham, he is the seed of David. In Luke, we go all the way back to Adam and show his HUMAN genealogy, because he is emphasised in the book of Luke as MAN, Jesus Christ as man. Then when we get into the book of John, Jesus Christ is emphasised in his DEITY, the fact that he is God. That's why instead of a genealogy, at the beginning of the book of John, what do we have? "In the BEGINNING was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us". And then we just start out with Jesus as an adult. See, in Matthew, it's the kingly genealogy. Mark, there is no genealogy, he (Jesus) is a servant, he made himself of no reputation. Luke, there's the human genealogy going back to Adam through the virgin Mary. And then in John, his genealogy is "he was in the beginning, he is God! He has always existed. He became flesh and dwelt among us." So John represents the deity of Christ. So with that in mind, if you think about these four faces, in the order that they are given in Revelation 4, we have the lion, Matthew, the ox, Mark, we have the face of a man, Luke, and we have the eagle, John. So, something to think about, I'm just throwing that out there. I think it's a pretty good theory, it makes a lot of sense. And I guess it kind of explains why the four gospels come in that order in our Bible, because that order is the same order that we find in Revelation 4. And so I just wanted to throw that out there. But anyway... You know you could look up all the verses about eagles, and draw your own conclusions there, I don't want to spend the whole sermon on that. So let me show you in Isaiah 6, because remember the creatures that we saw in Ezekiel 1 and 10, they were a little different, because they had FOUR wings, as opposed to SIX wings. Because the creatures in Revelation 4 actually had six wings, remember that? But they're both full of eyes. Look at Isaiah 6 verse 2. Actually let's just start in verse 1. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims" - now notice, not the "cherubims", we have "the seraphims". "Each one had six wings; with twain" - "twain" means "two"... "with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly." So here we have the exact number of wings that we have in Revelation 4. "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." Does that remind you of Revelation 4? They're saying "holy, holy, holy", they're praising God continually. They have six wings. So they have the same FUNCTION as the angels in Revelation 6 - not "angels" per se, I want to say the "beasts" or the "living creatures". They have the same function, and they have the same number of wings, and so on and so forth. So, you say "what is the difference between a seraph and a cherub?" Because remember, Revelation 4 and Isaiah 6 were dealing with the seraphims, and in Ezekiel 1 and 10 were dealing with the cherubims. Well if you look at the etymology of the word "cherubim", and the etymology of the word "seraphims", basically the word "cherubims" is a derivative of the number 4. And the word "seraphims" is a derivative of the number 6, and so basically that is just a name that refers to how many wings these living creatures have. So back to Revelation 4. Let's finish it up here, now that we understand the four beasts. It says in verse 6 that they were full of eyes, we saw that that was consistent with the Old Testament. Verse 7, the first beast was like a lion, the second beast like a calf, the third beast had a face as a man. Remember the calf was represented as an ox in the Old Testament, but an ox and a calf are the same animal, just different ages. And then it says the fourth beast was like a flying eagle, and the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within. And "they rest not day and night". I mean we're talking 24/7, He says "saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever" - and how often is that? All the time, right? When those beasts give glory and honour and thanks, they're doing it all the time. "to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down" before the throne. Now look, the twenty and four elders that are falling down, they're not doing this once, are they? They're doing it repeatedly. You've got to look at the verb tenses here. He says "WHEN the four beasts do this... the 24 elders", PRESENT TENSE,

“DO this.” It doesn’t say “did”, as though they did it one time. It’s saying this is what they do EVERY TIME the four beasts give glory and honour and thanks. THEN the four and twenty elders, not “FELL”, the four and twenty elders “FALL”, present tense, meaning that they do it... they do this, they do this. When the beasts give glory and honour and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne who liveth for ever and ever, verse 10, “The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” So get the picture. These 24 elders are seated around the throne, white raiments, crowns on their head. And when they hear the beasts giving glory and honour and thanks, they get up, and throw their crowns before Him and give Him all the praise and all the glory also. Then they pick up their crown, put it back on their head and sit down, and basically this drama is playing out over and over again. They are just constantly worshiping God, praising Him, throwing their crowns at His feet saying “YOU’RE WORTHY!” And obviously, what is a crown? It represents authority? These guys had a crown representing authority that they had. These are elders, these are Pastors, these are Bishops, these are preachers, these are prophets, that have been given authority on this earth to rule God’s house. The Bible says “Let the elders”, listen now, “Let the ELDERS that rule well be counted worthy of double honour”, in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5. So the elder is what? A ruler. And then he says in Hebrews 13 to “obey them that have the rule over you”, “who have spoken unto you the word of God”, “they watch for your souls”. And so these men have that authority, but they’re taking their crowns and saying “All the authority is YOURS!” Because a pastor doesn’t really have his own authority that emanates from himself. He only has the authority that God has given unto him. We are shepherds as Pastors. But Jesus is the chief shepherd. We derive all our power and authority from him. That’s why that crown is cast at his feet. And He is the one that is worthy to rule and reign. And we only derive any authority that he is good enough and gracious enough to give us. And of course, in the millennium, we will have even more authority, and so will God’s people that are not Pastors will be given authority based on their works. And he says in verse 11, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power”. “Power” means what? Authority, the ability to rule. “for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” You say “why are we even here? Why does this earth even exist? Why did God even create us?” For HIS pleasure. Period. Now, look... I think it’s great that God derives pleasure from us. That makes me feel like I have value in His sight. To know that I bring God pleasure. Why did He create Adam and Eve? Why even put them in the garden of Eden. For His pleasure. And He takes pleasure in His servants. He takes pleasure in fellowshiping with His servants, with talking to His servants, and he also takes pleasure in being worshiped and served by His servants. That is what He enjoys. And so that’s why we were created. That should have an impact on the way we live our life. It’s not about us. It’s not about us, it’s not about glorifying ourselves. We ought not to please ourselves, we ought to please God. We are created NOT to please ourselves, we are created for HIS pleasure, and everything in this world is created for HIS pleasure. That’s what the Bible teaches. Let’s bow our heads and have a word of prayer.

*Father we thank you so much for this chapter, it’s an often abused chapter by those who want to prop up a false doctrine that is directly contrary to what you taught in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. But because they want to contradict your clear teaching, they strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, by saying that Revelation 4:1 and 2 are the rapture when it has no resemblance to the rapture. God help me as a pastor to even be able to come close to being at the level of these 24 elders, they are definitely a model that we could attain unto. And Father, please just help us as we study the book of Revelation to learn and understand these things and get the truth, and we are looking to forward to the day that we will be there, and that we will see this scene in heaven ourselves. And it’s going to be a glorious time, in Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.*

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