**The Revelation Chapter Four**

This chapter is known as the “throne room scene.” It continues from the last chapter, verse 21, in which the Bride of Christ is offered to sit with Jesus in his throne, as he is set down with his Father in His throne, and continues through the 5th chapter.

This awe-inspiring chapter is all and only about God Almighty, His Word and His Plan of the Ages. In it we have His character illustrated directly and indirectly by all the various symbols.

Rather than indicating a location or describing a literal room, it illuminates the grandeur of His authority as sovereign of the universe.

**Vs. 1**

**After this I looked and behold, a door was opened in heaven…**

This phrase “after this” does not necessarily mean a “time” reference, inferring the next event in time. Rather, it is an expression used in the Revelation to denote a change in the subject or a change of perspective to be considered. It may mean the next events in time sequence, but not necessarily. The context has to determine this. Note that Rev. 18:1-5 does not follow after the closing events of the 17th Chapter. Rather, it is a different view of the same subject.

This is one of those “ratcheting” sequences that we considered in our Overview of The Revelation (see discourse of this same title at <https://www.harvesttruths.com/revelation-study.html>). We are “ratcheting” back in time, to be shown God’s character long before the Gospel Age.

It may also mean that after John recorded the 7 stages of the Church as found in the 2nd And 3rd Chapters, he now saw another aspect of the Revelation. Note Rev. 1:19, 20.

A clue as for timing can be found in Rev. 4:8, **“…saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, WHICH WAS, AND IS AND IS TO COME.”**

It is this last phrase, that we considered at length in Rev. 1:4, (see study notes for chapter one, <https://www.harvesttruths.com/revelation-study.html>). when we were first introduced to the Lord God. We saw there that the three elements of this phrase were included, but that in Rev. 11:17 and 16:5, the last part *“and which is to come,”* is spurious. Why? Because the setting of those two verses is after God sent Jesus back to earth’s atmosphere to set up the Kingdom and begin the Times of Restitution work (Acts. 3:19-21). God is not still “coming.” After 1874 He is considered to be “here,” so to speak, being represented by His Son.

All that being considered, this phrase – *“…and which is to come,”* being included in Rev. 4:8, indicates that this part of the vision of the great Throne Room of God predates our Lord Jesus’ return.

 **A door opened**, like an invitation to “see” another dimension of God’s character and plans. It is opened to the spirit-begotten, particularly the John Class living at the end of the Age, when the *“mystery would be complete”* (Rev. 10:7).

 **In heaven**, an understanding of spiritual things which the natural man receives not (I Corinthians 2:9-16).

 **And the first voice which I heard, as it were of a trumpet, talking with me…** In Rev. 1:10, we first learned of this trumpet-like voice. There it was introducing the John Class to the seven churches, but it was most importantly showing the High-priestly activity of Jesus Christ in his tending to the Gospel Age church’s needs and welfare! What a beautiful insight that opened for us! So too, here, we are going to be privileged to be given an “invitation only” understanding of our Grand Creator!

 **A trumpet** cannot be ignored, it is to gain our attention, like a “Herald” of times past. They would blow the trumpet before making important proclamations or announcements as well as when great dignitaries would be introduced.

 **Talking with me, which said, Come up hither and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.** The John Class was invited, encouraged, to come up to an elevated position, as if this opened door was above him. And indeed, gaining insights to the nature of our Creator is “high” above us. It is not of the earth or baser things of which we are more familiar, these understandings are of holy or sanctified concepts.

 **Things which must be hereafter.** Similar to Rev. 1:19 again, it is a re-set.

**Vs. 2**

**And immediately I was in the spirit, and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.**

This too reminds us of Rev. 1:10. It indicates that in order to have the ability to grasp this vision one had to be living at the end of the Gospel Age, rather than at the beginning. We know more now as the John Class than the actual Apostle John did, just by living during the time of our Lord’s return and the Harvest Message, which reveals the Divine Plan of the Ages.

 **One sat on the throne.** This demonstrates that God desired to REVEAL HIMSELF to His New Creation. It suggests a personal relationship. In vision, we are in the great throne room! Not a location, rather an understanding, a lofty elevation of comprehension.

 It is The Lord God Almighty on the throne – verse 8. Chapter 5:1, 7 helps to make this clear. He sits alone. Jesus is not pictured on the throne here. See Rev. 5:1 and 7. God is on the throne and the Lamb (as it had been slain) would come and take the scroll from God Himself.

 God is seated, that is, composed, having put all the principles in place and having started the *“wheels within wheels”* in motion. His Plan of the Ages progresses seamlessly from His vantage point.

 Again, the throne demonstrates His rulership and He is not stated to sit in anyone else’s throne! He is the emperor of Creation, unequaled, without comparison for all other beings were created and He was not.

 We recall that the earth is likened to His footstool! Isaiah 66:1.

**Vs. 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.**

Our first observation is that we have three different gemstones brought to our attention. Gemstones are very hard, being crystallized material. They have a beauty that is brought out by shining a light upon them. They will radiate the light tinted with their unique color(s). We have learned that gemstones represent worthy individuals (Malachi 3:17 “jewels;” Isaiah 61:10). And, of course, there is the glorious breastplate of the High Priest with 12 jewels or gemstones of different colors, one for each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Yet, later on, they take on the characteristics of the 12 Apostles.

 The various colors suggest different character attributes. It is sometimes difficult to be sure of the exact gemstone that is meant, but following are a few suggestions.

 **He that sat was to look upon like a jasper (perhaps a diamond?) …**

Although there are different opinions regarding this stone, whether it was a diamond or not, this gem is depicted in Rev. 21:11 as **“having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, CLEAR AS CRYSTAL.**” Here, in context, is the overall impression of the sight of the New Jerusalem – the Church complete in glory. We can readily understand that as the Church in her glorious divine nature radiates God’s character likeness, which is compared to a crystal clear gemstone (Jasper), a diamond would be a most notable example of purity of character and it radiates all the colors of the light spectrum. Another way of stating it is: God’s character illuminates all truth doctrines and principles.

 **And a sardine (sardius) stone…**

There are at least two variations of the sardine. One is considered to be the color of flesh, with a reddish hue. The other a red color tinged with yellow. We can interpret this stone as representing God’s warm and loving attributes, for “God is love” as the Apostle John states in 1 John 4:8. Also, further on in verse 7, we learn that one of God’s character attributes in depicted by the face of a man, which we believe is also love.

 Red or a reddish color is the color of PASSION, either for good or bad, positive or negative, love or hate (a “hot-headed person” is often shown with a bright red head).

 A prominent aspect of God’s love for mankind is in His providing the ransom price through the offering of His only begotten Son in sacrifice. Almost every feature of this foundation doctrine can be “colored” in red or reddish hues.

 **And there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.**

 A rainbow is made up of light particles passing through water vapors. Light to “enlighten,” water being the “refreshment” of the truth.

 Unlike the usual rainbow of seven colors, this rainbow has one color – emerald-green, the color of LIFE AND VITALITY. Perhaps there are various intensities of green, denoting the various planes of life that God’s Plan offers (immortality, mortal cherubim, seraphim, angels, human).

 Yet it is the rainBOW shape that is predominant. As the rainbow was created by God to represent one of His covenants (Genesis 9:8-17), which was a guarantee to preserve life from perishing by a flood, it is overarching in shape, symbolizing God’s protection.

 Combining the rainbow with green it represents that God is a provider of LIFE SUSTAINING COVENANTS. The three great covenants all offered life:

• The Law Covenant, given at Mt. Sinai, offered perfect human life on earth, which only Jesus was able to claim.

• The Grace or Sacrifice Covenant offers spiritual life – first immortality for the 144,000, but also spiritual life similar to the angels for the Great Company.

• The New Covenant for Israel and extended to all mankind offers perfect human life eternal.

 We “see” God’s glorious character in the diamond-like radiance, along with His predominant loving attribute, surrounded by His power to offer and provide everlasting life to all His submissive and obedient creatures. A loving Creator indeed!

 It is here that we should take a look back to Ezekiel, the 1st Chapter.

**Vs. 1 “…as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.”**

 This is strikingly like our **“…I looked and behold, a door was opened in heaven…”** Both places are indicating that we to be given an understanding of the highest order!

 We will consider the four living creatures of this chapter when we get to them in Revelation 4:6.

**Vss. 26-28 in part:**

**The likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone.**

Here the throne is as a blue gemstone, denoting the pre-eminent feature of God’s faithfulness.

 Psalm 36:5 **“Thy mercy O LORD is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.”**

 Psalm 89:2 **“For I have said, mercy shall be built up for ever, thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.”**

**And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.**

 Working backwards, we remember that man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Of all His earthly creation, mankind has the ability to reason, love and worship—all by freedom of choice, that is, free will. So, too, that intimates what God is like – a God who reasons out His actions, and that has love as His chief attribute. It reminds us of why of the four living creatures, one has the face of man. Here in Ezekiel 1:5, they *“had the likeness of a man.”* And in vs. 10 they had four faces, but the face of a man was the front or leading face.

**And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it.**

An amber colored fire has a warm, yellowish hue, representing God’s compassionate love, which is embodied in the Plan of the Ages.

**From the appearance of His loins even upward, and from the appearance of His loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.**

His loins represent God’s Plan of the Ages at work, applied. The upward represents the spiritual aspects of His Plan and the downward represents the earthly parts of His Plan. For example, His Kingdom is represented in Scriptures as being in TWO PHASES:

 • the New Heavens and the New Earth.

 • both North (spiritual) and South (earthly)

 • as Celestial (spirit beings) and Terrestrial (earthly beings).

 Note the various PLANES on the Divine Plan of the Ages Chart.

**As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.**

Here the rainbow has not the emerald-green hue to it, so we will consider the usual colors of the rainbow:

1. Red is the top or overarching color. It is God’s love.
2. Orange (copper color) represents perfect human life.
3. Yellow (golden color) represents the divine nature.
4. Green represents life and vitality.
5. Blue represents faithfulness.
6. Indigo is dark blue, a color of royalty.
7. Violet is dark blue with red added to it, purple-like. This represents that when love, demonstrated by sacrifice, is added to deep faithfulness, it is the highest or supreme royalty.

As observed earlier, when the light of truth radiates through the water vapors of truth that brings refreshment, all the various planes of life that God has provided for are brought to our attention. It is His faithfulness and that of His Son that is the basis of all that has life.

The rainbow here in Ezekiel once again demonstrates God’s loving provisions for His creatures through His Covenants. He is a life-giving and life-sustaining God.

**Rev. 4:4**

**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.**

The 24 elders are a small sub-study on their own. This is our first introduction to them and they will appear in 5 more chapters.

 Some observations:

1. If they are seated they do not seem to be “saying or singing.”
2. If they fall on their faces, they DO “say or sing” a message with information like a statement or they are expressing their worship to God and/or the Lamb.
3. On two occasions one elder “talks” to the John Class, as it were.
4. In all 6 chapters, they are mentioned in context with God’s throne.

The 24 elders appear in six chapters: 4:4, 10, 11; 5:5, 8-14; 7:13-17; 11:16, 17; 14:3; 19:4. These are all directly or indirectly in proximity to the throne of God.

 24 elders represent the personification of 24 Old Testament prophecies **spoken by 24 prophets of God. An elder represents those of aged authority. In Acts 3:21** **“Whom the heaven must receive (retain), until the times of restitution of all things, which *God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”***

And again in Hebrews 11:2 **“For by it *the elders* obtained a good report.”**

**In context this is the chapter in which a number of the Ancient Worthies are mentioned.**

 Seated upon seats (thrones), around The Throne of God, shows their nearness to him. Being clothed in white raiment symbolizes that they are just, worthy or pure. Having golden crowns demonstrates that they have divine authority. All of these symbols demonstrate that God had previously decreed by ancient prophecies the coming glorious Kingdom as well as some of the most important aspects or events of how that glorious Kingdom will come to be.

 In each of the 6 chapters that they appear, it is always in association with the throne of God. When they are seated they are in repose, waiting, for the fulfillment of one or more important prophecies. When they rise and fall on their faces, worshipping God or the Lamb, it represents that a fulfillment of an important prophecy has taken place. There are times in which they sing, and in their song, an elaborate message is given in association with their praise. And in two places, it is a singular elder who is “talking” to the John Class. Consider the following:

Rev. 5:5 **“And one of the elders saith unto me, weep not, behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the scroll and to lose the seven seals thereof.”**

 Perhaps from the prophecies of Jacob from Gen. 49:10; and Isaiah 11:1, 10.

Rev. 7:13-17 in part: **“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, what are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?...”**

In context it is the Great Company that is being described. There are a number of prophets and prophecies regarding the Great Company. Here are few examples: Habakkuk in 3:17-19, Jeremiah in 8:20, David in Psa. 45:14 and Moses in Lev. 16:8, 21, 22 (the Day of Atonement scapegoat).

The following list of 24 prophets and their prophecies as found in Br. Anton Frey’s Notes: pages 66-68 (with one exception, Abraham instead of John the Baptist).

1. Enoch as recorded in Jude 14, 15.
2. Abraham as recorded in Gen. 22:17-18.
3. Jacob in Gen. 49:10.
4. Moses in Deut. 18:15-19.
5. Samuel in II Sam. 7:13.
6. Job in Job 19:25, 26.
7. David in Psa. 30:5.
8. Solomon in Prov. 8:22-30.
9. Isaiah in Isa. 35:8-10.
10. Jeremiah in Jer. 31:29, 30.
11. Ezekiel in Ezek. 21:26, 27.
12. Daniel in Dan. 12:12.
13. Hosea in Hos. 3:5.
14. Joel in Joel 2:28.
15. Amos in Amos 9:13-15.
16. Obadiah in 21.
17. Jonah in Jonah 4:10, 11.
18. Micah in Mic. 4:1, 2.
19. Nahum in Nah. 1:15.
20. Habakkuk in Hab. 2:14.
21. Zephaniah in Zeph. 3:8, 9.
22. Haggai in Hag. 2:6, 7.
23. Zechariah in Zech. 6:12, 13.
24. Malachi in Mal. 3:17.

This list is a demonstration of what is being symbolized by the 24 elders.

Another, related interpretation is that the 24 elders symbolize the 24 Books of the Old Testament as arranged in some Hebrew translations. There you will find 24 Books instead of the common 39 Books. While all the same writings are in both, some Book divisions have been eliminated.

 The Five Books of Moses:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

The eight Books of the Prophets:

Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve (minor prophets).

The Eleven Books of the Writings:

Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Chronicles.

In either case, the authority (demonstrated by the white raiment, golden crowns and thrones), along with their proximity to God’s Throne, is unmistakable and represents His Word as found in the Old Testament, either as a whole or as Prophets/Prophecies, which are found therein.

It is important to recognize the “flow” of the end of the third chapter into the fourth chapter and on into the fifth. The throne of God is at the center of our attention. That which is shown on the throne, around the throne and before the throne, all contribute to our understanding of Him, by understanding His character attributes, demonstrated by His prophetic Word, and His messages that He sends forth.

In the fifth chapter, while still in the throne room, we are introduced to the Lamb. Here in verses 5-14, we have first one elder (vs. 5), then the 24 elders, who during their exclamations, clearly demonstrate that they are NOT the Church, not the Bride of Christ, not the Kings and Priests with Jesus. However, you cannot see this so easily from the King James Version. It requires using one of the better Bible Translations which use the oldest Manuscripts. In 5:9 the word “us” in the KJV is omitted. In 5:10 the word “us” should be “them,” the word “we” should be “they.” In essence, the 24 elders are using third person grammatical expressions.

To emphasize this point, in Rev. 14:1-3 we read that the 144,000 are singing a song which only they could know. In context we read that the 24 elders are there, a clear indication that the 24 elders cannot be the Church of the 144,000.

**Rev. 4:5**

**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.**

These are three things that God puts forth or directs to go forth.

 **Lightnings**

These are flashes, startling and sudden, unexpected. Yet they are bright lights which reveal truths to many people, not just the spirit-begotten.

 Psa. 97:4 **“His lightnings enlightened the world, the earth saw and trembled.”**

 Psa. 77:18 **“The *voice* of thy *thunder* was in the heaven, the *lightnings* lightened the world, the earth trembled and shook.”**

 When God directs that startling truths go out publicly, often it is frightening to the average person. We shall see in the Revelation this connection.

**Thunderings**

 Again, these are loud, sudden, proclamation-like messages of truth that go out over a wide area of society, frightening some and galvanizing others to action. Often it results in controversies.

**Voices**

These voices are not quite as startling, but rather it represents a persistent expression of truths which can be various aspects of truths that are steadily going forth in society.

 In Revelation we have each of these three: lightnings, thunderings (or thunders) and voices being expressed by themselves at times. However, we have a total of 4 chapters that have all three together, as here. But the other three places they occur also have “earthquake” added in context:

 8:5 **“And the angel took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar and cast it into the earth, and there were voices and thunderings and lightnings and an earthquake.”**

 Here the context goes back to verse 2 through verse 6. These lightnings, thunderings and voices will create an earthquake (that is, a social/religious revolution). In context, we read that the 7 Trumpets are brought to our attention and then they follow on afterward to start their trumpeting. These angels/messengers that trumpet are the same as the 7 messengers to the 7 stages of the Church’s development throughout the Gospel Age and it is their messages that are like *lightnings, thunderings and voices.* They create social and religious revolutions to some extent, but most particularly in the 6th (the great Reformation, 6:12, 11:13), and 7th (the Armageddon crash, 16:18), stages of the Church.

 11:19 **“And the temple of God was opened in heaven and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament (Covenant), and there were lightnings and voices and thunderings and an earthquake, and great hail.”**

 The context goes back to verse 15. This is the time of the 7th Trumpeter, the 7th stage of the Church, Laodicea. The ark of the covenant is in His temple. This represents the time when the 144,000 Bride of Christ is complete, though the Feet members may remain in the flesh for a time to deliver the final truth messages—the 7 last plagues, that lead to the great earthquake (16:18), along with hail, hard truths (16:21).

 Note the similarity of 11:19 with 15:5-8.

 16:18 **“And there were voices and thunders and lightnings and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.”**

 The context goes back to verse 17, when the seventh last plague was poured out. This earthquake is the greatest in human history as it leads to the removal of the “old heavens and old earth” (compare 2 Peter 3:7-13, Rev. 21:1), in order to establish the new. This final last plague, building in momentum from the previous six, is the startling, revealing truth that the god of this world – Satan along with his fallen angels – have been behind all these unjust, unrighteous governments and religions of the world (compare Ephesians 6:10-12).

 We have to mention the similarity to Exodus 19:16; 20:18, where Israel camped before the Mount Sinai. The effect is like what we have read in Revelation.

 So, in summary, these three symbols – lightnings, thunderings and voices – are what God uses to bring about the gradual revealment, and then leading to the final destruction of all error and unrighteousness in the earth. These are used to offset the “blinding” influences of Satan.

**…and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven Spirits of God.**

 Please refer to the detailed notes for Rev. 1:4. In essence, these are 7 messages of truth presented to Jesus, to give to the 7 messengers, to give to the 7 stages of the Church throughout the Gospel Age. Burning denotes that they are lit and give light/knowledge to those who are receptive. These messages have a calming effect to the right-hearted because the steady light of truth guides **(“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”** Psalm 119:105) them through their consecrated life, following in the footsteps of Jesus our master, rather than the startling, frightening lightning flashes.

**Vs. 6**

**And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal…**

 Rotherham renders it a “glassy sea.” This expression appears twice in a single verse later on in Chapter 15:2 (which we will consider).

 The word “sea” appears many times in the Revelation. However, it does not have the same symbolic meaning. We will consider why, but we do want to note that in Rev. 21:1 we read in part: ***“…and there is no longer any sea.”*** This is evidently *not* this “sea of glass,” for we do not expect to have this item cease to exist.

1. Sea means water. Water as a symbol can mean several different things, but here we believe that it is truth, the truth found in God’s Word.
2. Glass like unto crystal, or a glassy sea, like unto crystal. This demonstrates *clarity, purity.* There is nothing clouding or “muddying the waters” so to speak. It is the truth of God’s Word without any of the beclouding effects of man-made doctrines, or doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1). It reminds us of the “pure language” of Zephaniah 3:9.
3. Water, like air, is vitally necessary to support life. The Word of God is vital to sustain life eternal, for in it we find all of God’s instructions for successful living—for us as New Creatures and eventually for all restored humans. Being a “sea” suggests that there is plenty of it! All that might be necessary.
4. We have a somewhat similar or related expression found in connection with the Temple God instructed Solomon to build. In 1 Kings 7:23-25, 39-44 and 2 Chronicles 4:2-15, we can read about the “molten sea” or the “cast metal sea.” In 1 Chronicles 18:8 we read it was made of copper (mistranslated brass). This huge metal sea was 15’ across, 7.5’ deep and sat upon 12 oxen, three each facing the four cardinal points of the compass. It was situated in front of the Temple, offset to the south side (undoubtedly so as not to intrude upon the large brazen alter). When we remember that the south represents the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God, and that Jesus washes his future bride with the water of the Word (see Ephesians 5:25-27), then we can infer that God’s Word in its purity is for the cleansing of all from any sinful defilements by instructing all how to live in harmony with Him.

In Rev. 15:2 we read, **“And I saw as it were a sea of glass (Diag. “glassy sea”), mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass (glassy sea), having the harps of God.”**

In keeping with the 4th Chapter interpretation, this pictures that the final Feet members of the Body of Christ, are *supported* by the Word of God while they are being persecuted – *fiery trials,* in association with their getting the victory over the Papal Beast, the Federated Protestant Image and did not receive the *mark of their number*, as outlined in Chapter 13:15-18.

The Word of God has prophesied that there would be this final trial upon the true Church, but the promised support and help is also found in the Word of God. They are *mingled.*

The apostle Peter wrote **“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.”** 1 Peter 4:12

This verse also shows us that these victors have and can make harmony of the various strings or doctrines of truth.

Even though it might seem unusual to the have the Saints *standing on the glassy sea,* representing the Word of God, yet we have a very similar expression in Rev. 12:1 – **“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and *the moon under her feet,* and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”** The woman is the early Church and she has the Gospel Message, as found in the New Testament, as her garment (like a robe). She is supported by the Law and Prophets of the Old Testament. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, so too, the Old Testament supports our understanding of the New Testament and, in fact, Jesus stated as much in Luke 24:25-27 and 44-46.

**…and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind.**

 There does not seem to be a more direct way to symbolize that these four represent a most intimate aspect of God Himself— in the center and all around the throne. These four “living ones” (Diaglott), depict the four fundamental character attributes of God. Many times in Scripture the number or measurement of four or foursquare demonstrates an all-encompassing feature of God. In the Tabernacle the Most Holy was four-square, the altars were square, and in the Temple Ezekiel saw, the Most Holy was square. It is also demonstrated in His creation with the four cardinal points of a compass. But, like the compass, they also allow for various degrees of interaction, i.e. North-West, South-East, etc. With God’s attributes this might be demonstrated by His wisdom and love interacting to produce mercy.

**Full of eyes** represents how God’s four character attributes work *wisely* in the outworking of His Plan of the Ages. He knows both what lies ahead, but He also understands the *consequences* that His actions will leave behind.

**Vs. 7**

**And the first living creature was like a lion and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature had a face as a man and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.**

It is generally recognized that these four animals, or features of an animal, symbolically represent a specific attribute. However, there are some differences on two of them. This is not critical, the difference is NOT the attribute, but which animal depicts which attribute.

…**Like a lion…**This animal symbolizes God’s justice. In the following several verses we read that justice or judgment are what God’s throne is based upon. Psa. 89:14: **“Justice and judgment are the foundation of thy throne…”** and again in Psa. 97:1, 2: **“The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be glad. Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.”**

 In King Solomon’s great throne room, we read that lions were used on the 6 great steps leading up to the top platform where his throne sat. So it seems that the 12 lions (including the top platform —7 on each side, 14 in total), might represent that justice is the foundation for king Solomon’s throne, when he still possessed the wisdom gifted to him by God. 1 Kings 10:9, 18-20.

 Note: some believe that the lion depicts God’s attribute of power.

**…like a calf (ox in Ezk. 1:10)…** the calf or ox symbolizes power. In the Temple that Solomon constructed from God’s instructions, in the court a great cast metal sea was set upon the backs of 12 great oxen, three each facing the four cardinal points of the compass. It is their well-known ability to bear such great weight and work pulling plows (like we read of Elisha), that they were used to depict the strength of their power. 1 Kings 7:24, 25.

To continue this example, you harness with a yoke of oxen, but you would never harness lions with a yoke. An ox is a beast of burden, but a lion is not. Consider the following verses:

 Proverbs 14:4: **“Where no oxen are, the crib is clean, but much increase is by the strength of the ox.”**

 Psa. 144:14: **“That our oxen may be strong to labor…”**

 Note: some believe that the calf or ox pictures God’s justice. This is based upon the Scriptural instructions for the Levitical priests to offer up a calf without blemish on the Day of Atonement (and elsewhere), as an offering for sin, to satisfy God’s justice.

**…had a face as a man…** this represents God’s Love. As man was created in God’s image (to be able to reason and to love), so the human face can best express love. The human face can express love with both the eyes and the mouth, more so than any other of the terrestrial creation.

**…the fourth living creature like a flying eagle.** This denotes Wisdom. “Flying” shows an elevated vantage point to enhance the long-range vision of the eagle. This suggests God’s ability to know the end or outcome from the beginning. He well knows how all the various principles of both the physical and spiritual conditions will work out in practice, even over the long expanse of time. He never has to change course to try to compensate for some seeming problem or surprise that might upend or upset His pre-determined course of action, for all has already been taken into account. As some say, He spent eternity past planning for eternity future.

 “Flying” also demonstrates movement. His wisdom is ever active in the forward movement of His Plan of the Ages. Also, being elevated in flight, brings to mind the scripture that His thoughts are higher than man’s.

 We have this symbol of the flying eagle found in Rev. 8:13 – **“And I beheld, and heard an *eagle (Diaglott),* flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice:** **“Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the *remaining blasts (Diaglott),* of the trumpet of the three angels (messengers), which are yet to sound!”**

 It is God’s fore-sighted wisdom that announces that His three remaining Messengers will trumpet forth their messages of truth in such a powerful way, along with the surrounding circumstances, that those still under religious restraint to the Nominal Church errors of doctrine and practice, shall be GREATLY dismayed/distressed. The last three of the seven trumpeters are: Br. Wycliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, Br. Luther, the lighting rod of the Reformation and Br. Russell, the Harvest messenger.

 So we find that the symbol of the flying eagle can be harmonized with our understanding of the 4th Chapter.

 The four living creatures appear in 7 chapters: 4:6-9; 5:6, 8-11, 14; 6:1-7; 7:11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4. These are all directly or indirectly related in proximity to the throne of God. In five of these chapters, they are included with the 24 elders.

**Vs. 8**

**And the four living creatures had each of them six wings about, and 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.**

They each had six wings (6 X 4 = 24 total). 24 wings reminds us of the 24 elders, as well as the 24 horns (power) of the 12 oxen which hold up the Molten Sea (the Word of God). Wings are always in pairs, in order to balance one another, so pictured in Scripture (Rev. 12:14 **“And to the woman were given *two wings of a great eagle,* that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”)** Here we have shown that the Old and New Testaments work in harmony with one another to “bear up” and “support” the purer element of the Church during the long 1,260 years of Papal persecution.

 The number six is the implied number of man (Rev. 13:18). Yet it is 3 pair of wings. We can divide the books of the Old Testament into three parts – History from Genesis through Esther, the poetical books Job through Song of Solomon and then the Prophets, Isaiah through Malachi. In the New Testament we can find a similar three-part division – the History of Jesus and the early Church from Matthew through the Acts of the Apostles, then the Letters of the Apostles, followed by the Revelation (a book largely of prophecy). The two balance each other in flight: the instructions, lessons and encouragements from both the Old and New Testaments.

**…full of eyes within…** the complete Word of God (the wings), which demonstrates God’s four fundamental character attributes, are filled with His wisdom!

**…they rest not day and night…**  His instructions, His encouragements, are always available to us in His Word. Also, His Plan of the Ages are continually moving forwarding, unstoppable.

**…saying, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty…** like the 3 pairs of wings, the three divisions of the Old and New Testament all praise and glorify the great Author, by demonstrating His all-encompassing Divine Plan of the Ages.

**…which was, and is, and is to come.** This expression first appeared in Rev. 1:4 (please see the notes there), and it appears twice more, but without the last phrase *“and is to come.”* It is found in Rev. 11:17 and 16:5, which both are during the Harvest or end of the Gospel Age, a time when God turns His face of favor towards the earth and sends His Son Jesus back to earth’s atmosphere to represent Himself. This expression is being used to encourage us to look forward to His Kingdom. There will follow in the very next verse an expression that demonstrates God’s eternal nature of always having existed and that he exists forever.

**Vs. 9, 10, 11**

**And when those living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 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 honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**

In a grand climax to our invitation to “meet God Almighty,” His attributes (the four living creatures), as found in His Word (the wings filled with eyes within), and the 24 elders (the ancient prophesies regarding His Kingdom), all go to demonstrate praise and glory as well as obeisance to the great Author of all creation, in heaven and on earth! We cannot help but to notice that there are 7 expressions of thanksgiving and praise, divine perfection.

 In their praise, we find two of mankind’s most important questions answered: *“why are we here (exist)?”* and *“where did we come from?”*

The last question first – God created us, our home (earth), our moon, our solar system and even outer galaxies as part of the grand scheme of His divine plan. He created time (for He is without time except as it relates to His creations).

 We learn that we exist because it brings God pleasure! Yes, His great love desired to share existing, life, perfect life, eternal life, for all the willing and obedient of mankind and angels!