

Morning Sermon May 3, 2020
"What's It All About?" Revelation 4

4 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

² Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. ³ And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

⁶ Before the throne *there was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. ⁸ The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!"

⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

¹¹ "You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created."

Mom's favorite song when I was young, age 6 – 10 -- What's it all about Alfie, is it just for this moment we live ...

Later in college Philosophy prof – What is the meaning of life? What is God? Is there a God? He called these questions "beer questions" as he thought them unimportant but fun to talk about while getting drunk with friends at a bar ...

I happen to count these questions extremely important – What is the meaning of life?

What is the chief end of man?

I. We were created to enjoy life in another dimension; a spiritual, moral, eternal dimension –

4 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, ..." Revelation 4:1 (NKJV)

I believe when John saw a door opened in heaven, he was seeing a world, a place; that exists today, has always existed and will exist forever, though in the form of a New Heaven...

1. I believe he was seeing into a spiritual realm, not only one above us, but also near us, all around us –

¹⁵ And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

¹⁶ So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them." ¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2 Kings 6:15–17 (NKJV)

2. The kingdom of God is a moral, joyous place -

¹⁷ for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17 (NKJV)

3. *It is a place we see, but a place an ungodly world does not see, know or desire –*

³Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3 (NKJV)

⁹But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” ¹⁰But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 1 Corinthians 2:9–10 (NKJV) ...

¹⁴But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

A. *It is a place (and God is Persons) even we don't see perfectly –*

¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV)

B. *Yet when we are at our best, we see it best, see Him best –*

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God. Matthew 5:8 (NKJV)

We typically come to this place, when we are down, on the bottom, on our knees, in need, at Patmos, in the Spirit –

²Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, ... Revelation 4:2 (NKJV)

II. *We were created to enjoy a relationship with the Living and True God – Revelation 4:2-5*

²Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. Revelation 4:2 (NKJV)

1. *He is on a throne, meaning He is King, He is sovereign, He reigns over us, and over everything!*

A. *We are to hallow His Name –*

⁹In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Matthew 6:9 (NKJV)

B. *We are His subjects!*

C. *We are to obey Him; we are to do His will –*

¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:10 (NKJV)

2. *He is described but not in detail –*

³And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; Revelation 4:3 A

3. *There is a rainbow around His throne –*

and *there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.* Revelation 4:3 B

A. *A rainbow is a symbol of God's Covenant with creation, here it is a symbol of His grace –*

¹¹Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” Genesis 9:11 (NKJV)

¹²And God said: “This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: ¹³I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. Genesis 9:12–13 (NKJV)

B. *Green is the color of peace and prosperity, the rainbow is the color of an emerald –*

²In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. John 14:2 (NKJV)

What is pictured here is more than tranquility, from the throne of God's grace also come RICHES –

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)

⁷In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, Ephesians 1:7–8 (NKJV)

4. *We, as His people have representation at and around His throne –*

⁴Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. Revelation 4:4 (NKJV)

About our representatives, notice:

A. *Their number -*

twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders
Revelation 4:4 A

12 Sons of Jacob in the Old Testament (Israel)
12 Apostles of Jesus in the New Testament (Christians) We are God's People!

- B. Their title - elders πρεσβύτερος, α, ov
- C. Their clothing - clothed in white robes –
- D. Their and our high position - and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." Revelation 5:9–10 (NKJV)

5. The outworking ministry of God's Spirit –
⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. Revelation 4:5 (NKJV)

- A. Not gentle but powerful -
⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: John 16:8 (NKJV)
- B. Seven Spirits of God, there is only One Holy Spirit but He has a perfect number of ministries to meet ALL NEEDS –
- 6. A place provided for cleansing –
⁶ Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. ...

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9 (NKJV)

III. We were created to answer the Highest Calling, to live out the grandest adventure -

And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. Revelation 4:6 (NKJV)

⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ⁸ The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" ⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ¹¹ "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." Revelation 4:7–11 (NKJV)

- 1. Notice the High Calling of the Four Living Creatures, notice their fitness for that calling and their energetic activity in it –
 - A. The four living creatures' high calling, their environment, the throne of God, the presence of God -
And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures ... Revelation 4:6 A

These creatures were created to live in God's presence. God said to Moses, even when He would allow Moses a vision of His backside –

²⁰ But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." Exodus 33:20 (NKJV)

To dwell in God's presence, to see His face, at least as we are now, would KILL us! Our eyes cannot bear even to look at the brightness of the noon time sun, and the sun is but a fellow creature, we cannot look at the brightness of God's face and live!

- B. The four living creatures were designed to live in God's presence, to give God glory and to do His will –
Just as polar bears were designed for polar cold and fish are fit to live under and in water, so these creatures are FIT for God's presence:

(B1) Notice their eyes, better to see God with –
creatures full of eyes in front and in back. Revelation 4:6 (NKJV)

were full of eyes around and within. **Revelation 4:8 (NKJV)**

Full of, meaning a lot of eyes, like spiders or flies, but better ...

In front and back – eyes in the back of your head!

Around – eyes at every angle, not only front and back but both sides

Within – these are creature that not only see and know the glory of God, but they see inside and know themselves!

About man's heart, we don't typically know ourselves –

⁹“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV)

These creatures I do not doubt were PURE in HEART, as they do see God, Matthew 5:8, yet humble too, knowing they are but creatures!

All of these eyes are needed because they live in the presence of God -

⁴One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple. Psalm 27:4 (NKJV)

¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV)

They see God face to face all the time ...

(B2) Notice their appearance, they are either representatives of, or the best of ALL CREATION, I believe they are both –

⁷The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.

- Lion – strength, power, courage

- Calf – patience, service, self-sacrifice
- Face like a man – intelligence, in his right state knowledge of God, the image of God
- Flying eagle – soaring devotion –

³¹ But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)
(B3) Notice their wings giving them ability to quickly and easily do the will of God –

⁸ The four living creatures, each having six wings... Revelation 4:8

God designed some wonderful wings --- hummingbird --- but none better than these!

Note two what Isaiah 6 says about these wings –

²Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. Isaiah 6:2 (NKJV)

- Face cover, even with all those eyes God's glory is still too bright!
- Feet cover, feet are humble parts, shows their humility
- Two for flying, I believe still fast!

(B4) Notice their energy, their endurance –

And they do not rest day or night, saying: Revelation 4:8 (NKJV)

(B5) Their glorious message -

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” Revelation 4:8 (NKJV)

The Holiness of God: Extreme – Three times repeated!
Every person of the Godhead

(B6) Notice their calling to “glorify God is one they share with us and all creation – ⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and

worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ¹¹ “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.” Revelation 4:9–11 (NKJV)

³ And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!” Isaiah 6:3 (NKJV)

¹ O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens! Psalm 8:1 (NKJV)

(B7) Yet, we, created in God's image have even a more glorious calling than the Four Living Creatures, how?

- They are called to glorify God with their strength, we with our weakness –

²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 1 Corinthians 1:25 (NKJV)

- They are called to glorify God in a place of pleasure, we in a place of pain –

¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)

Cast Down But Unconquered -

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. ⁸ We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—

¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹ For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 2 Corinthians 4:7–11 (NKJV)

David Coker, Rynthia Jackson, my mom, so many of YOU –

“Before the winds that blow do cease,
Teach me to dwell within Thy calm;
Before the pain has passed in peace,

Give me, my God, to sing a psalm,
Let me not lose the chance to prove
The fulness of enabling love.
O Love of God, do this for me;
Maintain a constant victory.

Before I leave the desert land
For meadows of immortal flowers,
Lead me where streams at Thy command
flow by the borders of the hours,
That when the thirsty come, I may
Show them the fountains in the way.
O Love of God, do this for me;
Maintain a constant victory.

AMY CARMICHAEL

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:6–9 (NKJV)

This passage in first Peter brings up another difference between us and the four living creatures –

- They are called to glorify God in His presence, and with clear vision, we are called to glorify God at a distance, and by faith –
- ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8–9 (NKJV)

⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

Our love, our faith is called to take up a cross, to endure trials, to glorify God at a distance, when He is not seen this makes our call not just a love story, the four living creatures have that, but a love story ADVENTURE –

The Great Adventure
Geoff Moore & The Distance

Saddle up your horses Oh oh oh Oh oh oh
Started out this morning in the usual way
Chasing thoughts inside my head I thought I had to do today
Another time around the circle Try to make it better than the last
I opened up the Bible And I read about me
Said I'd been a prisoner And God's Grace had set me free
And somewhere between the pages It hit me like a lightning bolt
I saw a big frontier in front of me And I heard somebody say let's go
Saddle up your horses We've got a trail to blaze
Oh oh oh
Through the wild blue yonder of God's Amazing grace
Let's follow our leader into the Glorious unknown
This is the life like no other whoa whoa
This is the great adventure
Oh oh oh Oh oh oh yeah, yeah
So come on, get ready for the ride of your life
Gonna leave long faced religion
In a cloud of dust behind
And discover all the new horizons
Just waiting to be explored
This is what we were created for, yeah
Saddle up your horses We've got a trail to blaze
Oh oh oh

Through the wild blue yonder of God's Amazing grace
Let's follow our leader into the Glorious unknown
This is the life like no other whoa whoa
This is the great adventure
We'll travel on, over mountains so high
We'll go through valleys below
Still through it all we'll find that
This is the greatest journey That the human heart will ever see
The love of God will take us far Beyond our wildest dreams
Saddle up your horses We've got a trail to blaze Oh oh oh
Through the wild blue yonder of God's Amazing grace
Saddle up your horses We've got a trail to blaze (we've got a trail
we've got a trail to blaze) Through the wild blue yonder of God's
Amazing grace Let's follow our leader into the Glorious unknown
This is the life like no other whoa whoa This is the great adventure
Oh oh oh oh (this is the great adventure) Oh oh oh oh (this
is the great adventure)
Oh oh oh oh (this is the great adventure)
Saddle up, saddle up your horses ...

Arnold Brevick