A DOOR OPENED IN HEAVEN

Introduction: People often will study the first three chapters of Revelation then stop there instead of continuing on in their study. With the beginning of chapter 4, there is a great deal more apocalyptic language than in the first three chapters. Therefore many end their study with chapter 3 and never enjoy the benefits of the rest of the book. In this lesson, it will be our intent to study Revelation 4-5 as a door is opened in heaven for us.

Revelation 4 gives us not simply a view of heaven but the universe from the aspect of heaven symbolizing that God reigns from the center of the universe and He is in control. Revelation 5 then show Christ and our need to believe in Him for He is the one who is worthy.

I. BELIEVE IN GOD.
   A. The throne of God
      1. Rev. 4:1-3 “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. 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.”
      2. The idea of throne is stressed.
         a. Throne is used 17 times in these two chapters.
         b. The throne symbolizes the infinite rule of God.
      3. The one on the throne:
         a. No form is given.
         b. His character is described:
            (1) John sees two precious stones—jasper (probably a white diamond) and sardis along with a rainbow around it like an emerald.
            (2) God is righteous as described by the jasper
            (3) God is just in His divine judgments as described by the sardis.
            (4) God is merciful as described by the emerald.
         c. Coming out of the throne are mighty phenomena symbolizing His power, majesty, and glory.
   B. Those around the throne.
      1. Rev. 4:4-8 “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. 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.”
      2. The 24 elders:
         a. They were on thrones showing their authority, power, and rule.
         b. They had on white garments showing their holiness (only those who are holy have the right to come before God in worship).
         c. They wear crowns of gold showing their reign with God and Christ.
      3. 7 Spirits of God
         a. The Spirit can be sent wherever God desires.
b. As a lamp lightens the way, the Spirit teaches and comforts.

4. The 4 living creatures (beasts—KJV):
   a. Their identity:
      (1) They were able to see in every direction so nothing escapes their sight.
      (2) They each had six wings indicating their mobility.
      (3) One was like a lion—indicates strength.
      (4) One was like a calf—indicates service.
      (5) One had a face as of a man—indicates intelligence.
      (6) One was like a flying eagle—indicates swiftness.

C. The Worship Due God

1. Rev. 4:8-11 “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. 9And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10The 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, 11Thou 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.”
   a. The nature of worship.
      (1) *Worship* is from the Middle English word which means “worthiness, respect” and is defined, “reverence offered a divine being or supernatural power, also an act of expressing such reverence.”
      (2) The Old Testament word carries the meaning “to bow down, prostrate oneself.”
         (a) It was a posture which would indicate reverence toward one considered superior.
         (b) Notice how the elders fall down before Him.
      (3) The main New Testament word is *proskuneo* and literally means “to kiss toward.”
         (a) Arndt, Danker, and Bauer write that this word is: “used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before persons and kissing their feet or the hem of their garment, the ground...to express in attitude or gesture one’s complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure, (fall down and) worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to’ (882).
         (b) Zodhiates adds: “To worship, do obeisance, show respect, fall or prostrate before. Literally, to kiss toward someone, to throw a kiss in token of respect or homage. The ancient oriental (especially Persian) mode of salutation between persons of equal ranks was to kiss each other on the lips; when the difference of rank was slight, they kissed each other on the cheek; when one was much inferior, he fell upon his knees and touched his forehead to the ground or prostrated himself, throwing kisses at the same time toward the superior. It is this latter mode of salutation that Gr. writers express by *proskuneo*. In the NT, generally, to do reverence or homage to someone, usually by kneeling or prostrating oneself before him. In the Sept. it means to bow down, to prostrate oneself in reverence, homage” (G4352).
      (4) In worship we have the idea expressed of showing respect to one whom we consider Superior (notice the living creatures giving Him glory, honor, and power).
b. He is worthy of our worship.

   (1) As Creator
      (a) He created all things by the word of his mouth:
         i) Gen. 1
         ii) Heb. 11:3 “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word
             of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”
      (b) Man is the crowning point of that creation; Gen. 1:27 “So God created man in
          his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

   (2) Because He is eternal
      (a) Psa. 90:2 “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the
          earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”
      (b) He is the great “I Am”; Exo. 3:14 “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM:
          and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”
      (c) Thus, He is to be served; 1 The. 1:9 “For they themselves shew of us what manner
          of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living
          and true God;”

   (3) Because He is Holy
      (a) More passages speak of God’s holiness than any other part of His character.
         i) Isa. 6:3 “And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of
            hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”
         ii) 1 Pet. 1:15-16 “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all
             manner of conversation; "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
      (b) He is free of any sin:
         i) 1 John 1:5 “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare
            unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”
         ii) Jam. 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down
            from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”
      (c) He cannot associate with sin; Hab. 1:13 “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil,
          and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously,
          and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?”

II. BELIEVE IN CHRIST.

   A. The Book
      1. Rev. 5:1 “And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on
         the backside, sealed with seven seals.”
         a. In God’s right hand is a book.
         b. It was written on front and back showing fullness and completeness.
         c. It was sealed with seven seals to safeguard the material from being tampered with or
            exposed to view.

   B. Who is worthy to open to book
      1. Rev. 5:2-5 “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book,
         and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to
         open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and
         to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion
         of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals
         thereof.”
      2. An angel asks who was worthy to open the book and loose the seals.
         a. To loose or break the seals would be to allow the book to be opened.
b. To open the book would be to allow its contents to be known.

3. No one was found worthy to open the book which caused John to weep.

4. One is found to open the book:
   a. The Lion of the tribe of Judah.
      (1) Jesus is from the tribe of Judah
         (a) Gen. 49:10 “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawyer from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”
         (b) Heb. 7:14 “For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”
      (2) He had the strength and power of a lion.
   b. He is the root of David.
      (1) Promise to David:
         (a) 2 Sam. 7:12-16 “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.”
         (b) Mat. 1:1 “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”
      (2) Isa. 11:1-2, 10 “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:...10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.”

5. This Lion prevailed, conquered, overcame so He is worthy to open the book.

C. The Lamb
1. Rev. 5:6-7 “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.”

2. John sees a Lamb.
   a. This Lamb had been slain but was now standing and living.
      (1) A lamb and slain signifies a sacrifice.
      (2) The lamb standing indicates victory.
   b. He is located in a position nearest to the throne of God.
   c. His visage:
      (1) Seven horns.
         (a) Horn signified power.
         (b) Seven horns signifies the fullness and perfection of His power; Mat. 28:18 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
      (2) Seven eyes signifying His full and perfect wisdom and knowledge.
   d. Seven Spirits sent forth into all the earth.
      (1) This would be the Holy Spirit which Christ sent to the apostles;
         (a) John 14:25-26 “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall
teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

(b) John 16:12-13 “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

(2) The apostles went into all the world revealing God.

(a) 1 Cor. 2:9-13 “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

(b) The Lamb was opening to all men the book and making its contents known.

i) He overcame and is thus worthy.

ii) He carried out God’s scheme of redemption and through the work of the apostles revealed salvation to all.

D. Worship of the Lamb

1. Rev. 5:8-14 “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

11And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. 14And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.”

2. The living creatures and elders fall down before Christ.

a. They possess:

   (1) Harps which are symbols of praise.

   (2) Golden vials (bowels) full of incense identified as the prayers of saints.

b. They sang a new song.

3. The song is a song of redemption or the new spiritual creation.

a. He was worthy to open the book because:

   b. His death

   c. The redemption of a people for God.

   d. Made us kings and priests.

   e. The blessing of allowing His people to rule on the earth.

4. Angles, living creatures, and elders said:

   a. The Lamb that had been slain is worthy.
b. Seven qualities concerning the Lamb.

1. power
   a. Mat. 28:18 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
   b. It is the ability to perform what is inherent in one’s nature

2. riches; 2 Cor. 8:9 “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

3. wisdom
   a. 1 Cor. 1:24 “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”
   b. Col. 2:3 “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

4. strength
   a. Is the attribute by which power is put into operation.
   b. Eph. 6:10 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”
   c. 2 The. 1:9 “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power [strength];”

5. honor
   a. Phi. 2:11 “And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
   b. Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

6. glory; John 1:14 “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

7. blessing; Mark 11:9 “And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:”

8. Warren Wiersbe wrote, “It is interesting to contrast this doxology with the earthly life of Christ. His enemies said He was worthy of death (John 19:7), but the angels say He is worthy of praise. Men accused Him of working by the power of Satan (Matt. 12:24), but the angels say He is worthy of power. He became poor for our sakes (2 Cor. 8:9), but He deserves all riches. ‘The preaching of the cross is foolishness’ to sinful man (1 Cor. 1:18), but it is wisdom to the angels. On earth, Jesus was ‘crucified in weakness’ (2 Cor. 13:4), but in heaven He is lauded for His power. Dishonored on earth, He is honored in glory. Made a curse on the cross, He is today both the recipient and bestower of blessing.”

5. The totality of creation praises both the Father and Son.
   a. Four of the qualities ascribed to the Lamb are now given to both.
   b. The four living creatures who began the worship along with the 24 elders now end it.

Conclusion: These two chapters give us a wonderful view of heaven. When we see the majesty of God, it should provoke in us the desire to worship the one who sits on the throne.