

Pulling Back the Curtain on the Throne Room of Heaven

Message 2 of 5 in the series: "Pulling Back the Curtain"

A. About 60 years after He ascended into heaven, Jesus pulled back the curtain on himself, heaven, and the end times for his disciple John.

"This is a **revelation** from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 1:1-2 (NLT)

Life Application: "God **blesses** the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near." Revelation 1:3 (NLT)

B. Jesus pulled back the curtain so John could see the throne room of heaven.

1. There is a throne in heaven.

"Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.' And instantly I was in the Spirit, and **I saw a throne in heaven** and someone sitting on it. The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow." Revelation 4:1-3 (NLT)

Note: A throne is a place of **power, authority, justice, majesty, and honor**. The throne in heaven is far above any throne on earth. The one who sits on the throne of heaven is sovereign over all things.

"The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom **rules over all**." Psalm 103:19 (NIV)

Life Application: We must surrender control of our lives to the Lord of Heaven and earth.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:9b-10 (NIV)

2. The creator God of the universe who sits on the throne of heaven is utterly holy.

"Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder. And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit of God. In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal. In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. The first of these living beings was like a lion; the second was like an ox; the third had a human face; and the fourth was like an eagle in flight. Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, '**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.**' Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever), the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne and say, 'You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.'" Revelation 4:4-11 (NLT) (*See also Ezekiel 1:4-20 & Isaiah 6:1-3*)

"Holy, Holy, Holy" = sinless, perfect in goodness and righteousness, transcendent

Life Application: We can trust that the God who is sitting on the throne of heaven will always do what is right and best.

"**God's way is perfect.** All the Lord's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection. For who is God except the Lord?" Psalm 18:30-31b (NLT)

3. Jesus is the Lamb of God.

"Then I saw a scroll in the right hand of the one who was sitting on the throne. There was writing on the inside and the outside of the scroll, and it was sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel, who shouted with a loud voice: 'Who is worthy to break the seals on this scroll and open it?' But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll and read it. Then I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll and read it. But one of the twenty-four elders said to me, 'Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David's throne, has

won the victory. He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals.’ Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the sevenfold Spirit of God that is sent out into every part of the earth. He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. And when he took the scroll, the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they held gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. And they sang a new song with these words: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth.’”

Revelation 5:1-10 (NLT)

“For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. **It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.** God chose him as your ransom long before the world began...” 1 Peter 1:18-20a (NLT)

Life Application: Because Jesus died in our place, we can boldly approach the throne of God.

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

4. Everyone in heaven loves to worship God and sing His praises.

“Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders. And **they sang in a mighty chorus:** ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.’ And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They sang: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.’ And the four living beings said, ‘Amen!’ And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the Lamb.” Revelation 5:11-14 (NLT)

Life Application: We were made to worship our holy, good, sovereign, and loving God.

“Come, let us worship and bow down. **Let us kneel before the Lord our maker,** for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.” Psalm 95:6-7a (NLT)

**** WARNING **** If we do not worship God, we will worship something or someone else.

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Connect Group Questions:

1. Describe the most meaningful worship experience you’ve had. What made it so special?
2. Read Revelation 1:1-3 & James 1:22-25. What do these two passages say about obtaining blessings from God? Why do you think we often struggle with both reading the Bible AND obeying what it says?
3. Read Revelation 4:1-3, Psalm 103:19, & Matthew 6:9-10. What is the significance of God’s throne in heaven?
4. Read Revelation 4:4-11. If “holy” means to be sinless, perfect in goodness and righteousness, and God is “Holy, Holy, Holy,” then how can any of us sinners ever come to Him? (See 2 Corinthians 5:17-21)
5. Why is it significant that Jesus is often referred to as the “Lamb of God” in the NT? (See John 1:29, Revelation 5:1-10, 1 Peter 1:18-20, & Hebrews 4:16)
6. Read Revelation 5:11-14. Why do you think everyone in heaven loves to worship God and sing His praises, but the number of American Christians attending/participating in worship services each week has been decreasing since 1985?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

“It ain’t those parts of the Bible that I can’t understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand.”

Mark Twain

“I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment... It is frustrating to have discovered a new author and not to be able to tell anyone how good he is; to come suddenly, at the turn of the road, upon some mountain valley of unexpected grandeur and then to have to keep silent because the people with you care for it no more than for a tin can in the ditch; to hear a good joke and find no one to share it with. . . . The Scotch catechism says that man’s chief end is ‘to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.’ But we shall then know that these are the same thing. Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him.” CS Lewis