Introduction:

As followers of Christ, we have a glorious future to behold. John, through the Revelation shown to him, gives us not only a peep behind those heavenly doors to view this glorious place but, as much as is in him to explain with human words the things he saw, he also shows us the One who sits on the throne in heaven: “The Lord God Almighty.”

He, who is not only the center of heaven but the center of our faith – of Him, there is no one like Him. Therefore, out of all the Bible stories we learn and the lessons we take away from the different characters written within the pages of this sacred book, it is even more important that we learn as much as we
can about the God who not only authored the book but authored all life and sits as Sovereign Ruler over all.

I pray that the words of this lesson will overwhelm you in a good way that we may all stand in fresh, wondrous awe of Him once more. That we would come to be renewed in our realization that He is God, and we should love and worship Him as such.

**Revelation 4:1** “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.”

There on the island of Patmos located in the Aegean Sea, supposedly in one of the worst predicaments a man of that day could find himself in, being in exile as a criminal in this horrid place to suffer, John is extremely blessed to experience something very few ever would: an extreme Revelation. Hence, the name of this book he has authored.

In this Revelation, marvelous wonders are revealed to him about the future. This is why this book is viewed as apocalyptic in nature. It mostly hones in on events that have not yet taken place; things that are forthcoming and will imminently take place, whether one is ready for it or not.
It is in the words written in this book we are told some wonderful and insightful things about our heavenly home. John is in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day when a voice speaks to him as if it were a trumpet behind him (Revelation 1:10) and he sees the vision of the Son of Man, our Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:9-18). John was then commanded to “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this,” (Revelation 1:19, NKJV; see also verse 11). After the which, the explanation of the seven churches was given (Revelation 1:20-21) with the command following, stating, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches,” (Revelation 3:22, NKJV).

Today’s lesson picks up “after this,” after everything that occurred in chapters 1-3 thus far. And, if those events weren’t fantastic enough, John is in for even more special revelations with the first landing him with a view to the throne room of heaven. How awesome is that?!

He said, “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.” How specifically is this door identified we don’t know, but it is there and John knew what it was and he was getting ready to be granted access to view this special place that we should all hope to see one day. This is an event similar to what Ezekiel experienced as well when by the river of
Chebar. He said, “The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God,” (Ezekiel 1:1).

The same voice he heard from Revelation 1:10 now speaks to him again with the command to, “Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.” John is invited to come near to the place from where the voice is speaking. John is invited to view heaven; to take his eyes and his heart off of what earth is doing to see what heaven is doing.

Wow!

The reason for John coming to that place was that he might learn and then later relay the things that will happen “hereafter.” Hereafter really is a word that has a way of defining itself if you turn it around backwards and say “after here.” Many upon many, now, and throughout history, have lived their lives for the here and now. But, what the voice is saying is there is something more coming. There is a time that goes beyond our current point of reference; there is a time that will reach further into eternity than our human minds are able to comprehend. What we do and how we live will be measured for the hereafter, for the time following now.

To really process that in our hearts and minds and prepare for our eternity there, it all starts with us really we really knowing and understanding the significance of Who is at the center of it all: the Lord God Almighty!
Revelation 4:2 “And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.”

The transition took place “immediately.” He was “in the spirit” (compare Revelation 1:10) where he got a front row seat to view this throne room of heaven and its happenings.

The reason many often refer to it as the “throne room of heaven” is because when John’s eyes rest on that place the first thing that he notices is there was a “throne... set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.” A “throne” is a place of rulership, authority, and judgment. With that in mind, we see that the throne is occupied, meaning Someone is sitting on it who is ruling, expressing authority over all, and at the ready to judge. Something we would all do well to keep in mind.

I personally love the idea that the throne is fully represented as being occupied. I have shared before that when I pray, it doesn’t take much for me to imagine or look at that sacred time as if I am coming before a throne where our heavenly King sits. Actually, that’s exactly what we are doing. In that, we are drawing near to His presence and humbling ourselves before Him in worship, adoration, with holy supplications.

We are never alone now, or in the hereafter. The throne is fully occupied by God and there is never a time when it is not
occupied. And, He who sits upon it is reigning in all sovereignty and power.

Revelation 4:3 “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.”

Someone foolhardily said, “Diamonds are a girl’s best friend.” I laugh at that expression for there are so many things in the world I would find pleasure in or value more highly than a piece of polished, pressured coal or rock.

Just look at the beauty of God expressed in these words. Gems and precious stones have been used throughout the Bible to describe wealth, worth, and beauty. Later in this same book, when John is given the vision of the New Jerusalem, in it we see the make-up of that glorious city radiating with a similar description as what John is now view coming from the throne and from He who sits on the throne. After all, the city can only be as beautiful as the God who dwells there. Glory!

Revelation 21:11 says, speaking of that holy city, that it was seen, “Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Of this same verse, I previously wrote:

“By using the wording “a stone most precious . . . clear as crystal” in trying to describe the “light” he saw radiating
from that beautiful city, I imagine John struggled to even begin to compare its luster with something the human mind can conceive and call valuable.

Can you imagine a rare and precious gem the size of a city as the one being described here, with the glory of God shining through it projecting its radiance and brilliance farther and brighter and more magnificent than any eye could ever think to see or mind fathom? To John, this is how he sees the beauty of that holy city. It’s the only way he could come up with describe it: radiant, clear and priceless. One will never see beauty like that in any other place. No earthly thing can compare or even begin to truly describe the preciousness found there.” (Word For Life Says/The New Jerusalem)

With that, John’s eyes rest on the throne which is the focus of heaven. And, we know it must be the focus because this was immediately where John was drawn to look. It couldn’t go with just a passing glance. It was a “seat” that demanded attention for its brilliant wonder.

Another wonder that stood out about this heavenly scene was a “rainbow.” Unlike the multi-colored rainbow we are used to seeing, this rainbow radiated like an emerald. Now, as beautiful as the rainbow that becomes of the symbol of God’s covenant with His people is to behold (see Genesis 9:13-17),
can we imagine what this emerald arc must have been like viewing this green spectacular around the throne?

Revelation 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.”

Another part of the scene John witnessed was the presence of “four and twenty seats” which were around the throne and on those seats sat “elders,” (compare Revelation 11:16).

The exact occupants of who sits on those “seats” are not known, although there is much speculation. But, some of the things we notice about them is they are “clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

If we take a look at Revelation 3:5, there are a “few names” or a remnant described there from the church of Sardis are considered overcomers and are counted “worthy” because they have not “defiled their garments.” To these, they had the promise of being “clothed in white raiment” as we see pictured of those elders around the throne of God.

Not to confuse the elders seated in the throne room of heaven with those of the remnant from that church, what we can draw from this is no matter whom they are, no one will be close to God without such representation of purity. It is expressed in
His word, He is looking for a church that personifies Himself, being radiant and glorious, without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:27).

Then, there are their “crowns of gold” which speaks of their authority. Just for reference sake, crowns are also something that is promised to God’s people in that time to come as part of their heavenly reward when we are in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:7-8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4).

Revelation 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.”

The scene intensifies with the show of God’s natural power because that is just who He is. And, the throne is not there just for show but there is a great amount of activity coming “out of the throne” or coming forth from the throne. What is seen and heard are “lightnings and thunderings and voices.” This same kind of phenomenal activity is seen throughout the different scenes of heaven (see Revelation 8:5; 11:19; 16:18, just to name a few). Compare the power of this activity to the presence of God those like Isaiah and Moses experienced (see Isaiah 6 and Exodus 19:16-20). God’s power and majesty and authority demand this reaction, and so much more.
Then, there were “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” The number “seven” in the Bible, particularly in the book of Revelation is seen as the number of perfection and completeness. Used here it shows the completeness of the Holy Spirit. It is specifically referenced to “Spirits” in Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 5:6, as well as the above verse. It is also a number used to show other things (compare the usage of this number in Revelation 1:12; 8:2, 10:3 just to name a few).

Revelation 4:6 “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.”

Taking in more of this heavenly scene, John notices other things that make this place and the activity surrounding the throne even more special. “Before the throne there was a sea glass like unto crystal.” In this, we really gain an understanding of the awesomeness this wondrous place permeates with. Everything in heaven is beautiful and really beyond description and compare, from top to bottom.

If you have ever watched one of those home shows where people are venturing to buy or renovate a house, people pay attention to the floors. They will tell you in a split second if the flooring is not up to their liking. Well, what John sees coming
under and before the throne is just as magnificent as everything else. It’s “like unto crystal,” meaning it’s completely clear. We are given a similar description of what the streets look like in our new home, that New Jerusalem. There, “the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass,” (Revelation 21:21).

Another thing of note John recorded was the appearance of living creatures: “Round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.” Ezekiel and Isaiah, in their visions, describe something similar to what John now sees (see Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1:4-14; 10:20-22). The wonders there have been described and re-verified throughout God’s Holy Word, on more than one occasion. All to show us things we will experience in no other place, except before the presence of God; except in heaven. We should strive daily to make it to this wonderful place where we can see all the glories of God manifested in so many wonderful ways that we will wonder why were we holding on to earth so tightly.

Revelation 4:8-9 “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. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.”
These beasts who are “full of eyes,” showing they are not limited in what they can see, never stop praising God. This part of the scene is also very similar what we see in Isaiah 6:3 where the Seraphim are crying out to one another, “Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.” God’s holiness is beyond compare and the pure worship of God as such goes on unrestrained “day and night.”

Why do we try to limit or stop God’s worship He is deserving of? The psalmist said, “And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long,” (Psalm 35:28). Some of us need to take a cue from heaven and praise Him like you know He is God!

Worship in heaven is going to be unlike any experience you have ever seen, felt, or experienced here on this earth. I don’t care how hot the service was (as some refer to it when they have an awesome worship experience); nothing or no one could even begin to wrap their human minds around the concept of what it will be like when we get to that blessed place.

Because in that day, and in that place, we will be before the “Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Make no bones about it; there was never a time God was not. He has always been! He is the One “who liveth for ever and ever.” We are told over and over again throughout the Bible of the
everlasting nature of God. Isaiah proclaims, “From eternity to eternity I am God…” (43:13, NLT). The psalmist tells us, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God,” (Psalm 90:2), and many, many more. All to proclaim that God “was, and is, and is to come.” He is completely eternal and completely worthy of all our praise!

The beasts are seen giving Him “glory and honour and thanks.” What are we giving Him today?

Revelation 4:10-11 “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.”

How do so many today believe they can enter the presence of God in any kind of form or fashion? Heaven knows how to respond before the Lord. Heaven knows the proper way to recognize and worship God. Heaven knows the position to take before the Almighty. Heaven knows who is responsible for all creation and honors Him as such. Heaven knows all of this… What about us?

Those same elders who were seated so close to God now are seen throwing down the “crowns” from their heads before His
holy throne. Crowns mean nothing compared to His glorious nature. They surrender all to Him and “fall down before him that sat on the throne.” God is to be our true and only focus of worship. Anything that we think we have or accomplished is to be laid at His feet as we bow our hearts, minds, and bodies in holy reverence and adoration of Him.

Heaven teaches us to praise God like you mean it! “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power!”

He is the one who has “created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (compare Genesis 1:1 and Colossians 1:16-17). God is the reason that we are all here. God is the reason for the existence of everything you and I see on a daily basis. God is the reason for every breath we take and every move we make. God is the reason! “Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee,” (Nehemiah 9:6).

And, it was His “pleasure” to do so, and it was for His “pleasure” to do so. Aren’t you glad about it?

**Conclusion:**

In today’s lesson, John showed us how heaven responds before the Lord God Almighty. How do we respond before Him?