



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Revelation 4: 1-11

Winter 2026

"The Throne Above"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, it's good to have you back.

Our passage this morning, which is Revelation chapter 4...and with Revelation chapter 4, we enter into the third division of the Book of Revelation.

Revelation chapter 4;

**4** After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, (*this goes back to chapter one*), like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." <sup>2</sup> Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. <sup>3</sup> And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. <sup>4</sup> Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.

### **The Throne and Worship of the Creator**

<sup>5</sup> Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; <sup>6</sup> and before the throne *there was something* like a sea of

glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. <sup>7</sup> The first creature *was* like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature *was* like a flying eagle. <sup>8</sup> And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say,

“HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *is* THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.”

<sup>9</sup> And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

<sup>11</sup> “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

#### Revelation 4: 1-11

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word, and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow in prayer.

Again LORD, we come before You on this Sunday morning and say; ‘We praise You and thank You for this hour that we have together, that we have in Your Word, and that we can come here and we can read such a glorious text as Revelation 4.’

LORD, we pray that You would teach us from this text that the Spirit of God, (referred to as “the seven Spirits” in this passage), the complete Holy Spirit, that He would teach us and open our hearts to receive the message and make the applications

that are so important for us. So LORD, we look to You to bless—and pray that You would do that, teach us, build us up in the faith.

We pray for others, LORD, who are not here; some are not well, some are traveling. We pray for those who are ministering abroad, that You would protect them, and bless them, and bless their ministry. And those who are not here because of ailments, we pray that You would give them strength and health, and return them to our fellowship—but bless them in this hour at this time.

LORD, we pray for Your rich blessing on all of us. You bless us every day, 'beyond what we ask or think'. We're really not aware of all the many manifold blessings that You give us at every moment in life, and every day of our life. We become so accustomed to freedom, and health, and safety on the roads that we give little thought to it—but every moment, every moment of our existence is a gift from the hand of our Sovereign God, of whom we get a glimpse of in this text.

So LORD, we thank You for Your blessings to us, and we thank You for this opportunity in this hour to enter into 'the glorious presence' in heaven.

LORD, bless us as we do that. Encourage us, strengthen us, and help us to understand the things that You would teach us in this text.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

*(Message)* Deep under the streets of London near Parliament, there are some bunkers from World War II that were known as 'the Cabinet War Rooms'. Today, they are 'The Churchill Museum'.

When Winston Churchill first entered them, just after becoming Prime Minister, he said, "This is the room from which I will direct the war." And from there, he worked to defeat an evil enemy. It's an interesting place to go, down into that subterranean place and be able to see where some of the most important decisions of the 20th century were made.

Centuries earlier, John had a similar experience...similar but very different; he went up into heaven, into 'the throne room of God', where the Almighty directs the affairs of this world.

In Revelation 4, we are given a glimpse of it, and here there is a complete change from what we have been studying...chapters 2 and 3, where the weakness and compromise of many of the churches are exposed.

And all of that is typical of the church at large...all of the warnings and the encouragements that we have in those chapters apply to us: Their failures and fears as they face persecution, and as they were challenged by worldliness...and as they faced the possibility of martyrdom.

But in chapter 4, we leave all of that to enter what R.H. Charles described as, "An atmosphere of perfect assurance and peace. It is a place of righteousness and power, and no failure."

Following the general outline of Revelation, that's given back in chapter 1, verse 19, John has written of the things which he had seen when he recorded the vision of Christ in chapter 1. He has recounted the things which "are", with the state of the seven churches in Asia Minor—which show the Lord's deep concern and care for His church in that age...but in all ages, (for us as well, today).

Now, the third portion of the book is about to begin, the things which will take place "after these things", (*vs1*); future events that will precede the coming of Christ and His Kingdom on earth. They will be events of war, and plagues, and great tribulations such as the world has never known—a period of conflict in which Satan and antichrist will seek to destroy the people of God. God will pour out His judgments on the unbelieving world, and the forces of evil will attempt to frustrate God's plan and purpose. These are the things which will take place.

But, before John is given a vision of that he is given a vision of heaven and the throne of God. Before the tribulation is revealed, he is encouraged with revelation about God's sovereign glory.

Chapters 4 and 5 are somewhat pivotal in the Book of Revelation...for they relate as much to chapters 2 and 3 as they do to chapters 6 through 22. They were as important to the church in John's day as they are to us today...and as they will be to God's people in the future—especially to God's people in the future.

In John's time, the church faced persecution from the Roman Empire. John himself was experiencing that, (that's why he was on the Isle of Patmos). Peter wrote roughly in these times, some decades before this book was written, but wrote of the concerns that the church had from the Roman emperor and empire. Peter wrote of "the fiery ordeal among you" – and I take that statement from him as literal – "The fiery ordeal among you," he said, "don't be surprised by it..." (1Pet 4:12), —and we shouldn't be either. The world will always oppose the church. Christ warned His disciples of that in the Upper Room Discourse, "A slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." (Jhn 15:20).

But...what we must always remember...**always** remember..., is 'God is on His throne'. He has not let go of the reins of time and history; He is guiding events and ruling the world at every moment—and that's the vision that John has given here in chapter 4.

He's finished writing the letters to the seven churches, (and some time may have passed since he set down his pen and sent these letters off). John is on, as I said, 'the lonely island of Patmos' when he sees, "...a door standing open in heaven..." (vs1a), and then he heard a voice. He calls it "the first voice." (vs1b). It is the voice that he heard back in chapter 1 that told him to write this book...it is the voice of Christ, who spoke with majestic authority.

What John heard 'sounded like a trumpet', (vs1c), and the Lord said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." (vs1d) And so again, as in chapter 1, John finds himself, "in the Spirit", (vs2), under the Holy Spirit's control and illumination—and in a vision he is taken up into heaven.

[Some of the older dispensationalists interpreted this as 'the rapture of the church.' We've talked about the rapture, (and I wholly believe in the rapture and believe it is a pre-tribulation rapture), but I don't think that's the correct interpretation here. Later, John appears to come back down to earth, (and there seems to be travel between heaven and earth in this book, in 'the revelation' that he is given), so the language here wouldn't support that, either. It is addressed exclusively to John, not to a wider group, not to the church as a whole. And it is given to him, he is 'called' up into heaven for the specific purpose of giving him revelation...giving him this book.]

Well, the first thing he sees in this vision of heaven is a throne. The throne of God is a major subject in the Book of Revelation. The word *throne* occurs over 40 times in the Book of Revelation, (it occurs 17 times just in chapters 4 and 5), so it's a major theme... and that's the first thing that John sees: "a throne".

Now, we need to remember that 'the things' that John sees here are not to be taken literally. Now, I need to clarify that somewhat further, he sees things that will literally happen...he sees persons, and events, and things that are real and are literal, but they are described in 'figurative language', 'symbolic language' that represents that truth.

Some of these things are otherworldly, and so they're described in these metaphors and similes of the book. And we're to expect that, I think, from the very beginning, in the first verse of the book, (Rev 1:1), because there John wrote that the things of this book were "communicated" to him.

Now that word, *communicated*, very often means communicated...that's all. But it also has the significance of '*communicated in signs*'. The word itself is related to the

noun for 'signs and symbols'; and so that '*communication*' I think we see, (particularly here in the Book of Revelation), is to be understood in that way. Literally, we could translate it, "Signified to me" ...these things were "signified." That statement, I think though, is key to interpreting the book...it is a book of *symbols*; it is a book of *figures*.

There is not, I don't believe, 'a literal door into heaven', and this idea of the throne could be taken literally. Christ is there physically; others are there in heaven physically – Elijah, Enoch. Christ could be sitting on a literal throne. But I would say this: if this is a literal throne, it is a throne like something we've never seen before. The reality is, this is speaking of the Father, and God is a spirit, and a spirit doesn't need a chair on which to rest or rule. So, 'the throne', while it may be literal, the point is the meaning of the *symbol* of a throne...and that is *power*, that is *authority*, that is *government*.

So what this vision *communicates* is that 'God is absolutely sovereign' ...over world affairs, the affairs of the universe, the billions of galaxies...they are all under His guidance, His control. And all of that, as vast as the universe is...and as complex as the universe is, it is finite—it is limited and God is *infinite*. And so all of that great vastness of the universe is like a speck of dust on His finger and He is in control of all of that.

His government, (what John is being told here), is "standing", (*vs2b*). And John sees that first because the only way to get understanding of the world, of events...the only way to have a correct understanding of life – your life, my life, individually – is to see it all from the throne of God. We only have insight into history and the unfolding of events as we see them from the vantage point of heaven, because heaven is where the events of earth originate.

So John is brought into 'the room', (as it were), from which God, 'directs the world', (to paraphrase Churchill's words). And from there, he will be shown "...what must take place" ..., (*1d*), '...what *necessarily* will happen...', (that is the idea). These events that will unfold in the last days will occur, not by chance but by God's direction. They "must take place", (*ibid.*), John writes, because God has planned them and will execute them.

All of that is meant in that one word "*must*". It is a Greek particle and it's a small word. It's a three-letter word, but in it...is a world of *theology*. God can reveal the future because He has planned it all...and because He has planned it all, it **must** take place.

I say that because there are theologians today, (and I haven't heard a great deal about them in the past few years), but theologians who are very popular, who teach the opposite...that God has *limited* His knowledge of the future. It's a *self-limitation*, so that He doesn't know everything that is going to take place...and so there are lots of possibilities. It is called 'Openness Theology', and it means the future is open to all kinds of changes and possibilities...and we don't know what they are. Well, fortunately the Bible does not support such an idea, an idea of, 'a limited view of God'. No, God is unlimited.

They say, 'He can't see the future.'...Well, the only thing I know that God is said not to be able to do—is lie. It says that twice, once in Hebrews 6:18, and once in Titus 1:3, "God...cannot lie." That is His only limitation that I'm aware of.

But as far as knowing what is before us, very clearly there's no limit upon Him. If you would like some proof, just sit down after this lesson, sit down this afternoon and read Psalm 139. It extols the omniscience and the omnipotence of God—that God knows everything there is to know, and God has all power—unlimited power. And we see that all through Scripture; in Ephesians 1:11, Paul says that God, "...works all things after..." (or *according to*), "...the counsel of His will". He knows all of the possibilities as well, but He knows what **will** actually happen by what He has decreed to happen. He knows what will happen because He's decreed it!

And since He, "works all things according to the counsel of His will", (ibid.), since everything occurs according to His plan and His will, He knows everything. He is omniscient, (*all-knowing*); He is omnipotent, (*all-powerful*)..."the Almighty", as He is described in this chapter—and He is full of glory.

In verse 3, He is described as surrounded in splendor and worship;

“And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.” (vs3).

That's a description of God without being a description. No form of God is given; we don't know any form that God has. “God is spirit” ...that's what Jesus told the woman at the well in John chapter 4, verse 24; He is everywhere. Paul wrote that God, “dwells in unapproachable light...no man...can see Him.” (1Tim 6:16). ‘No one can see Him and live.’ (Exo 33:20).

But His glory can be seen in some way—and it is the glory of His light that John sees and describes as being like the brilliance of precious stones. It's difficult to say what the meaning of all these stones, or colors, is—but they certainly indicate that heaven is a glorious place. It is a place of color...of all kinds of color, and beauty, and glory, and light, and splendor.

Jonathan Edwards said, “We will see colors there, never seen before.” The picture of, ‘an emerald rainbow’ is unique...what a beautiful picture that gives; it reveals God's glory. The ‘bow around God's throne’ indicates *mercy* because the rainbow, you'll remember, is a symbol of the covenant that God made in Genesis 9, verse 16, with Noah ...and gives the promise, (as we see it whenever there is a rainstorm), we see it and are reminded of what God said...that, ‘He would never again destroy mankind in a flood.’

So whatever all the colors and symbols may mean, the revelation given shows that heaven is a desirable place to be. We're not anxious to go to heaven; we should be; it is a sanctifying desire. Paul told the Philippians, ‘It is far better to be there than to be here’, (Phl 1:23)—and we need that attitude because, as I say, that is sanctifying.

If we desire to be with Him, we will live lives that are different...lives that are orderly and lives that are proper, and moral, and honor Him. And we get that desire to be there, in part, by reflecting on the glory of it. Really it's, ‘Glory beyond words.’— The glory John saw of the invisible God, that glory radiating from His throne...and it's not just that; “Around the throne...”, ‘...seated on twenty-four thrones, were twenty-four elders

and they were "clothed in white robes...", and wore, "...golden crowns on their heads."  
(vs4b).

And when we read that, we wonder, 'Who are they?...twenty-four elders?'

One interpretation is that they symbolize, 'The one people of God represented by the 12 patriarchs of the Old Testament, and the 12 apostles of the New.'

That's possible...but their song in chapter 5, verses 9 and 10, distinguishes them from the redeemed, (those who have been redeemed by the Blood of Christ). They don't say that, 'That's occurred to **us**', but rather use the word, "them" to speak of 'the redeemed'.

They separate themselves from the redeemed; so most likely to my mind, they are angels. Colossians chapter 1, verse 16, states that there are various levels, classifications of angels, for there it speaks of angels in ranks of "...thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities...". So I think it's better to take the '24 elders' as a high order of angels given to worship God, (perhaps the cherubim).

The glory of God's throne is described in verse 5: From it came, "...flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder."; which is a symbolic way of describing God's power and His majesty. 'The seven Spirits of God before the throne...', (ibid), are a description of the fullness of the Holy Spirit...so, I think we have here 'the Spirit of God'. John is, "in the Spirit", (vs2), and the Spirit is described as 'coming forth', or, 'before God's throne'. [The idea of 'the seven Spirits' doesn't mean there are seven individual spirits; rather it's a way of speaking of the Spirit as 'complete', (because *seven* is the number of perfection and completion.)] So, it is describing Him 'in His completeness', 'in His greatness, His power, His authority.' And that's what goes forth from God's throne: 'The everywhere-present, all-powerful, Holy Spirit—the third Person of the Trinity.'

So, we have the Trinity referred to in these two chapters, chapters 4 and 5. Here you see the Spirit of God and the Father...and in chapter 5 we will see the Son of God on His throne.

Around the throne..., (John tells us in verse 6), ...was "like a sea of glass, like crystal..." (Nothing like it on earth exists...it doesn't fit any human experience.) So it's, "like a sea...", (and that suggests the vastness of it), but, "...of glass...", (or it's 'like glass'), it's, "... like crystal;..." (vs6a). Like a precious stone that is clear. The purity of the *glass* (or *crystal*), a sea around the throne suggests 'the holiness of God'.

The original idea of *holiness* is 'separateness' ...because God is holy, we are separated from Him. None of us can approach God as we are. We are separated from Him by a great, shining sea, (that's the idea). If that is the meaning, and I think it is, then John here is emphasizing the Majesty and the Holiness of God.

And that *majesty* and *holiness* is heightened by the "...four living creatures..." around the throne, which are described as, "...full of eyes in front and behind." (v6b), but having different appearances from one another.

Verse 7, "The first creature *was* like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature *was* like a flying eagle."

These four are related to the four cherubim of Ezekiel 1, though there are differences. In Ezekiel, for example, each angel has four faces and four wings. Here, they have six wings, and each creature has one face, so there are differences. But these are clearly associated with the cherubim of Ezekiel's vision and the seraphim of Isaiah's vision in Isaiah 6, (vs3), who are singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts." The picture we're given, though, is a strange one, (you've probably noticed), "full of eyes in front and behind." (vs6b). That strikes us as a little bit bizarre. But we need to remember: 'This is *symbolical* language...and it's not meant to be taken literally.' It is not the picture that we are to hold on to...it is the meaning of it.

And the meaning of the eyes is that, 'They are full of knowledge.' They look toward God, and they look toward creation. They are always *seeing*—and their worship, therefore, is based on what they *see*...what they *know*. —It is intelligent worship, and they represent the praise and adoration given to the Creator by the entire creation.

These are creatures. They're angels, heavenly creatures. Perhaps, these are seraphim while the others are cherubim, (that's a suggestion). Each form suggests what is *noblest*, what is *strongest*, what is *wisest* and *swiftest* in nature...(man being the wisest.)

The worship continues; in fact, the worship goes on continually. *That* is what is always taking place in heaven...constant worship of the LORD. They are constantly giving praise to God, saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD God, The Almighty, Who was and Who is, and Who is to come", (*vs8b*),—Who is eternal, in other words...'No beginning, no end.')

Now, that's a modified form of the song the seraphs sang in Isaiah 6. John's vision is similar to those given to Isaiah and Ezekiel—and his experience was the same as theirs. The Book of Ezekiel and the ministry of Isaiah both began with a vision of God. Ezekiel begins his book by saying, "I saw visions of God", (*vs1*), and he describes 'a storm coming with wind and fire and light all around.' (*vs4*). Isaiah described God in chapter 6, (*vs1*), when he had his calling to the ministry. He described God on His throne, "Lofty and exalted."

Both men prophesied during times of national crisis. Isaiah, after godly King Uzziah died and the future seemed very uncertain for the nation, (for it was very concerned, 'What is to follow now? The godly king is gone.')

...and Ezekiel when Judah was defeated and captive in Babylon. In both cases, these men's ministries began with the assurance that even though the world looks dangerous, and you feel like you're in defeat and life seems very uncertain...'God is still on His throne.' And that is the message here.

As the Book of Revelation proper begins, 'The Apocalypse', (the prophetic part of the book, (*chapter 4*)), God is represented as 'On His throne'.

He is first of all, Holy...and as I said earlier, the basic idea of holiness is separation. God is different from us, separate from us:

He is eternal, never created; He has always been.

We are created, and we are separated as by a great sea.

This is an important fact to understand. God is holy, separated from us.

He is not like us.

He is self-existent; we are not.

He is self-sufficient; we are not.

He doesn't need us; we need Him.

We like to think of ourselves differently from that...we like to think that we're very independent. In fact, that is considered a trait of Americans to have this independent spirit...a sense of 'self-reliance', a 'rugged individualism'...that is historically what has been said.

I personally think that's good, I think that's a virtue., and to the degree that it is possible, people should be self-reliant. They should strive to be financially independent, and not dependent on others. And Paul talks about that to the Thessalonians, 'Work with your hands. Save, and be able to use what you save to help others in need.' (*1Th 4:11-12*).—But always striving for that 'self-reliance', (if that's the right way to put it), with the knowledge that ultimately, fundamentally, we are all completely dependent upon the Lord God in whom, as Paul told the Athenians, "...we live and move and exist...", (*Acts 17:28*). 'Every breath of life', as Daniel told Belshazzar, 'comes from the Lord God.' (*Dan 5:23*). We need to understand that.

We need to understand the holiness of God.

That only He is truly self-reliant.

He cannot be frustrated; nothing can thwart His will.

We can trust Him, and we should look to Him for everything.

So the angels worship Him as *Holy* and they worship Him as *Almighty*—'the One who has His hands on everything'. That's how Dr. Johnson defined this word, *almighty*. [And that is literally what the Greek word, *pantokratōr*, means. It's like, three words—but *pan* means 'all things', 'everything'. And *krátōr* comes from the word that means, 'to possess', 'to control'.]

And that's what God is. He is the God who is **Almighty**. 'His hands are on everything'...and, 'He controls everything'.

And that being the case: Since He is Holy **and** Almighty, He deserves our worship, in Whom we can have the greatest, absolute confidence.

Now what a comfort that was to the seven churches that lived in hard times, when it seemed that evil was everywhere and all-powerful, (as it does in our own day). Some of the churches were facing an imminent threat of persecution. Some were living near Satan's throne, (the church in Pergamum was), and all were living under the shadow of Caesar's throne.

But the throne above, God's throne, is greater, (and that is an understatement). He, (not Caesar, nor Satan), is the Almighty, His strength and power are unlimited. And even though we live in an age when '*being good*' seems weak and ineffective, (as it did for those early Christians in the early churches), still, it is not so. God is *good* and He is *holy*, and His will for us as His people is *perfect*—that never changes.

"The Almighty...", is the One, "...Who was and Who is and Who is to come." (vs8). **Eternal**. His power, wisdom, and love are the same in every age, from eternity to eternity.

That reassurance was given here to encourage those suffering saints in Asia Minor and throughout the world—and throughout time in every age, to *persevere* through the trials. So the four living creatures give glory and honor...and thank Him.

And, as they do, John sees, "...the twenty-four elders...fall down before Him who sits on the throne..." (vs10).

'Falling down' before a person was an act of respect in the ancient Near East. There is an obelisk, a small pillar...(a small object, it's about that tall, *six feet*, I guess). It is called the Black Obelisk, and it's found in the British Museum.

It's very interesting because it depicts Jehu, king of Israel, bowing down in submission to the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser III, (so it is archeological evidence of these names and the integrity of Scripture). But the fact that you have this King of Israel bowing down to a pagan is concerning.

And that was the danger for the churches, that they would fall down before Caesar, and under duress, offer a pinch of incense to the emperor in worship—and in so doing, compromise their faith.

There is only One who is worthy of our worship, only One before whom we can bow down in our heart and honor as God...and that is the Lord God, the Triune God.

The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders give us the example of what we are to do and what we are to say:

They give Him praise,  
They bow to Him alone, and,  
They cast their crowns before Him.

That is an expression of the truth that, 'Only He rules'. We don't rule...He wears the crown. There are kings, and princes, presidents, and prime ministers all over the earth, but the ultimate ruler is the Lord God.

As Daniel said in Daniel 2, (vs21), "...He, Who changes the times and the epochs, He removes kings and establishes kings..." —He creates time, He governs history, and everyone and everything that is in it. He is the kingmaker, so all honor and obedience is

to Him who is King, who is presently on His throne ruling and directing all the affairs of life.

That's the significance of casting the crowns before His throne—and the angels, (the twenty-four elders), confirm that in verse 11 when they give their praise to God, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." (vs11).

Those words, "*Worthy are You*", were used in Rome to greet the emperor when he entered the city on a triumphal parade. And the words, "*our Lord and God*", were introduced by Caesar Domitian into his cult of emperor worship. It is as though John, (or the heavenly beings), were making the point to the early Church that, 'There is only one "Lord and God", only one who is worthy...Never forget that! All things were created by Him; all things exist by His will!'

Now, can a God like that know *everything*!? Yes!

So He cannot...not know everything. He can only, 'not know everything', in the small, ridiculous philosophies of men...Not in the Bible.

All things exist by His will, all things that are, or even will be...everything existed first in the *eternal* will of God. That is the reason for their existence. And God's will is, 'His knowledge and purpose put into action'. He knows everything because He has planned everything.

Life is not the product of chance. The entire universe is ruled by God, He rules it for His glory...and for our good. And so He is worthy to receive glory and honor and power.

Caesars may occupy thrones, and evil may appear to be in control and the dominant power...but that's only in appearance. In reality, God rules. That is the message from the throne of God...'HQ', 'Supreme headquarters', where God is directing the war on evil...and from where He will defeat it.

And that's the message of this chapter as the book begins to unfold:  
The Tribulation to come,  
The judgments God will pour out on mankind,  
And the persecutions that Satan will bring on God's people.

The seven churches of John's day were facing great trials. Christians today face them too, so this is a message for us now. God is sovereign...Know Him, worship Him, trust Him...and approach Him!

We can do that in prayer. In that way, we come directly into the throne room of God and find grace to help in time of need. And He will make us strong to stand in the day of trouble; He is able, He is willing—and He alone is worthy of our complete trust and worship. Is your confidence in Him? Do you know Him?

You can only know Him through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Redeemer who died for sinners. We are all sinners, but God sent His son to die in our place, and through faith, and faith alone in Him, we're joined to Him...we are put right with God, and we are made citizens of heaven.

There is a 'door' into heaven...and that is Christ. May God help you to enter through that door. May God help you to believe in Him. —And help all of us to live in complete trust in Him.

*(Closing prayer)* Father, we come before You and acknowledge that there is nothing to compare with our Triune God: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. You do sit on the throne; You rule and govern everything.

And we are in a good place. We may not feel that way sometimes, for the troubles of life can really press upon us. But we need to avert our gaze from our troubles and trials, to heaven and to the throne where You rule and You reign.

And You are in control, and You will bring everything to a good end for each and every one of us that are in Christ, who have put our faith in Him—so we thank You for that. Bless us LORD.

And we pray that,

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine on you,

And be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,

And give you peace.

We pray that in Christ's name. Amen.

*(End of Audio)*