

Session 4 The Beauty of God in His Heavenly Court (Rev. 4)

I. THE BEAUTY OF GOD IN HIS HEAVENLY COURT (REV. 4)

- A. God's beauty is expressed in *His person* and *His heavenly court* (how He looks, thinks, and feels). His royal court or heavenly sanctuary is filled with honor, majesty, strength, and beauty (Ps. 96:6).

⁶***Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. (Ps. 96:6)***

- B. The Lord's royal court is the place of perfect beauty (Ps. 50:2; 119:96).

²***Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God will shine forth. (Ps. 50:2)***

⁹⁶***I have seen the consummation of all perfection [beauty and majesty] ... (Ps. 119:96)***

- C. Revelation 4 is one of the greatest passages on God's beauty. It describes the Father's throne. I see four main categories, each having three themes. These 12 themes have many implications.

²***Behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. ³He 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. 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 head. ⁵From the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. ⁶Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal...around the throne, were four living creatures...*** (Rev. 4:2-6)

1. The beauty of **God's person**: how God looks, feels, and acts (Rev. 4:3)

2. The beauty of **God's people**: the Church enthroned, robed, and crowned (Rev. 4:4)

3. The beauty of **God's power**: manifestations of power in lightning, thunder, voices (Rev. 4:5a)

4. The beauty of **God's presence**: His fire on lamps, seraphim, and the sea (Rev. 4:5b-7; 15:2)

II. BEAUTY OF GOD: HOW GOD LOOKS, FEELS, AND ACTS (REV. 4:3)

- A. God's beauty is seen in the many colors that radiate from His throne, including the brightness of diamonds (jasper), fiery red glory (sardius), and the various colors of the emerald rainbow.

²***Behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. ³He who sat there was like a jasper [diamond like brightness] and a sardius stone [fiery red] in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald [green]. (Rev. 4:2-3)***

- B. **Jasper stone**: A "diamond-like" crystal brilliance radiates from God's throne (Rev. 21:11). This speaks of His splendor. He is described as covered with garments of light—multi-colored light.

¹¹***Her [New Jerusalem] light was like...a jasper stone, clear as crystal. (Rev. 21:11)***

²***You...cover Yourself with light as with a garment...*** (Ps. 104:2)

- C. **Sardius stone:** A sardius stone is a deep red gem. This speaks of God’s fiery desires of holy love. His beauty is seen in His personality (emotions, character, happiness, holiness, desires, etc.).

²⁴***The LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous [passionate] God. (Deut. 4:24)***

1. God’s affections include the Father’s delight over His Son, the Son’s delight over His Father, and their love for and pleasure in their people (Isa. 62:4; Jn. 15:9).

⁹***As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you... (Jn. 15:9)***

⁴***But you shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you... (Isa. 62:4)***

2. Understanding His emotions gives insight into *why* God did *what* He did—in creation, redemption, and in His leadership over history.

- D. **An emerald rainbow:** The rainbow speaks of how God acts in tender mercy. God’s beautiful personality is seen in how He relates to His people with indescribable kindness and tenderness. God’s beauty is expressed in His tenderness to sinful and broken people. The Lord is good, and His mercy endures forever towards His people (1 Chr. 16:34, 41; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3, 6; 20:21).

¹³***I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth...***¹⁶***I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant... (Gen. 9:13-16)***

⁶***The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth...” (Ex. 34:6)***

III. BEAUTY OF GOD’S PARTNERS: ENTHRONED, ROBED, AND CROWNED (REV. 4:4)

- A. God’s beauty is seen in the exaltation of the saints as they are enthroned, robed, and crowned. The presence of the elders around His throne reveals His desire for partnership with His people.

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. (Rev. 4:4)***

- B. **Enthroned:** The elders are enthroned with God’s authority, endowing them with unspeakable dignity. The saints will sit on thrones. God so exalts His former enemies that they reign with Him.

²¹***To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne... (Rev. 3:21)***

- C. **Robed:** The elders are clothed in white robes, which speaks of their priestly ministry. He trusts His former enemies to be priests who represent Him and communicate His glory to creation.

- D. **Crowned:** The elders wear crowns expressing the rewards they received because God remembers, esteems, and rewards their works (Rev. 2:10; 3:11).

¹¹***Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (Rev. 3:11)***

IV. THE BEAUTY OF GOD’S POWER: MANIFESTATIONS OF POWER (REV. 4:5A)

- A. Flashes of lightning filled with divine energy proceed from God’s throne. Indeed, His throne releases beautiful and glorious manifestations of His heart and mind to the saints.

⁵*From the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. (Rev. 4:5a)*

- B. **Lightning**: Flashes of lightning continually go forth to release God’s energy, light, and splendor (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18). What if divine lightning strikes individuals and corporate gatherings with impartation of His life and power to people throughout the New Jerusalem?

- C. **Thunderings**: God’s thunder includes giving personal and corporate messages to His people (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 10:4 11:19; 16:18). Thunder was heard on Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:16-20; 20:18-21).

⁴*When the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write [the message]... (Rev. 10:4)*

- D. **Voices**: This includes various sounds, songs, and music (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18). God’s beauty is seen in the majestic music, sounds, choirs, voices, noises that are near Him.

¹⁹*The temple was opened...there were lightnings, noises, thunderings (Rev. 11:19)*

- E. Jesus’ voice is powerful and full of majesty like a trumpet (Rev. 1:10; Ps. 29:4).

¹⁰*A loud voice, as of a trumpet...¹⁵*His voice as the sound of many waters... (Rev. 1:10, 15)**

⁴*The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. (Ps. 29:4)*

¹⁷*The LORD your God in your midst...He will rejoice over you with singing. (Zeph. 3:17)*

V. BEAUTY OF THE SPIRIT’S PRESENCE: LAMPS, SERAPHIM, AND SEA (REV. 4:5-7)

- A. God’s presence is manifested as fire on the seven lamps, the four seraphim, and the sea of glass like crystal (Rev. 4:5-7; 15:2). God’s beauty is seen in how the Spirit imparts His presence to His people to strengthen, renew, beautify, and anoint them. He makes His people strong and beautiful forever.

⁵*Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. ⁶Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal...And around the throne, were four living creatures [seraphim]...⁷*The first living creature was like a lion, the second...like a calf [ox], the third...like a man...and fourth...a flying eagle. (Rev. 4:5b-7)**

- B. **Sea of glass**: The saints will gather on the sea of glass-like crystal in God’s fire (Rev. 15:2).

²*I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast [Antichrist]...standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. (Rev. 15:2)*

¹⁰*A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him... (Dan. 7:10 NAS)*

- C. **Lamps of fire**: The lamps speak of the Spirit’s work and manifest presence (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 5:6).

- D. **Living creatures:** The four living creatures are *seraphim*, which means “the burning ones.” They show forth four different faces of God’s beauty in redemption (lion, calf, man, eagle) and are a picture of the different ways that God’s people are to relate to and serve Him.

⁷***The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third...had a face like a man, and the fourth...was like a flying eagle. (Rev. 4:7)***

- E. The seraphim and Isaiah were overwhelmed at seeing God’s beauty in His court (Isa. 6:2, 5).

¹***...I saw the Lord sitting on a throne...²Above it [the temple] stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one [seraphim] cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts!”...***

⁵***So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone...for my eyes have seen the King...” (Isa. 6:3-5)***

1. To be holy means “to be totally separated from” something. God is totally separated from everything sinful; thus He is totally pure or holy. However, there is more to holiness.
2. God is also separated from everything created (or common); thus He is transcendent. He is “infinitely superior” to everything that is created, and He is “wholly other than” all that exists. In other words, God possesses holiness or transcendent beauty.

- F. Unbelieving kings at the end of the age will seek to hide from God’s unveiled glory.

¹⁵***The kings of the earth, the great men...hid themselves...¹⁶and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne...” (Rev. 6:15-16)***

- G. Ezekiel described “layers of glory and brightness” around Jesus’ throne like concentric circles going outward. He saw a great cloud engulfed with raging fire, with amber brightness radiating from it. Within that cloud were four living creatures who looked like burning coals and sparkled like burnished bronze. Above the great cloud was an awesome crystal firmament on which sat Jesus’ sapphire Throne, from which amber glory with fire and brightness shone forth.

⁴***Behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber... ⁵From within it came...four living creatures...⁷They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze...***

¹³***Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of torches...²²The firmament above...the living creatures was...awesome crystal...²⁶above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne...like a sapphire stone...with a man [Jesus] high above it.***

²⁷***His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. (Ezek. 1:4-27)***