

Behold, I Come Quickly...

A Study of Revelation

PART 2 Revelation 4:1 - 11:19

TRIBULATION

LESSON 2 Revelation 4:6 - 5:14

The Scroll and the Lamb

Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. (Revelation 22:7)

REV 4:6 – 5:14

Zoology

REV 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.

7 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.

8 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.

The Greek word translated "beast" is actually "zoa" or "zoon" from which we get "zoology," meaning a study of "living creatures" or "animals." "Living creatures" or "living ones" might better fit the observation.¹ The "living creatures" (beasts) in the throne room may be the "watchers" described in Daniel chapter 4:

DAN 4:13 I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, **a watcher** and an holy one **came down from heaven;**

The word "watcher" is translated from a Chaldean word meaning "angels".² We will take a special look at the being called "a watcher."

¹ LaHaye, REVELATION ILLUSTRATED AND MADE PLAIN, p. 83. Walvoord, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, p. 109.

² "Watcher," Smith's Bible Dictionary, p. 321. E. W. Bullinger, The Companion Bible, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1990 Notes to Daniel 4:13. See also: Rev. Clarence Larkin, The Book of Daniel, Glenside, PA: The Rev. Clarence Larken Estate, 1929, pp. 71, 72. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1866-1891, reprinted December 1996, Vol.9, p. 402.

The Court of the Watchers³

DAN 4:17 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that **the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men**, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

- **Daniel 4:17 indicates that there is a council of watchers (angels) in heaven over which God presides supreme.**
- **The decrees of this heavenly court are executed on the earth.**
- **The decrees of God are said to be that of this council.**
- **In Daniel 4:24 the decree of the watchers is said to be that of the most high.**

DAN 4:24 This is the interpretation, O king, and **this is the decree of the most High**, which is come upon my lord the king:

- **They execute his decrees.**
- **They are his ministers.**

These "watchers" were "full of eyes", had six wings each, and cried "holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" day and night. Isaiah 6:1-3 also describes the creatures around God's throne as Seraphim, each having six wings and crying "holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts":

ISA 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. **2** Above it stood **the seraphims: each one had six wings**; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. **3** **And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.**

Ezekiel 1:5-10 describes four similar creatures, but probably a different class of angel, as these creatures had four wings each:

EZE 1:5 Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. **6** And every one had four faces, and every one had **four wings**....

10 As for the likeness of their faces, **they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.**

At best we can only speculate as to the meaning of these four beasts.⁴ Symbolically the beasts around the throne represent the fourfold nature of Jesus Christ. The lion, king of the beasts, signifies His kingship, the ox, a beast of burden, speaks of His humble servitude to mankind, the creature like a man recalls His humanity, and the flying eagle ruling the skies speaks of His divinity.⁵ These creatures parallel the theme of the gospels:

The Four Creatures and the Gospels⁶

The four creatures around God's throne parallel the Gospels:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| • The Kingship of Christ | The Lion | Matthew |
| • Christ as the Servant | The Ox | Mark |
| • The Humanity of Christ | The Man | Luke |

³ Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 9, pp. 402, 403. Larkin, The Book of Daniel, pp. 71, 72. Jamison, Fausset, and Brown, A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 587, 588. Albert Barnes, Barnes Notes: Daniel, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, Vol. 1 p. 255. Levy, REVELATION: Hearing the Last Word, p. 73. Walvoord, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, pp. 108-111.

⁴ E. W. Bullinger, Commentary of Revelation, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1984, pp. 221-227.

⁵ Hutchings, Daniel the Prophet, p. 109. Duck, Richards, REVELATION: GOD'S WORD FOR THE BIBLICALLY-INEPT, p. 71.

⁶ Jamison, Fausset, and Brown, A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical, Part II, Vol. III, pp. 673, 674. Walvoord, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, p. 110.

- **Christ as the Divine Word The Eagle** **John**

Jewish tradition says that Israel camped under four standards:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| • East | Judah | Lion |
| • North | Dan | Eagle |
| • West | Ephraim | Ox |
| • South | Reuben | Man |

In the center was the tabernacle, which contained the Shekinah, or the symbol of Divine presence.

Christ will rule with:

- **Kingly righteousness with hatred of evil, answering to the lion springing terribly on the victim.**
- **Laborious diligence in duty, the ox bound to the soil.**
- **Human sympathy, the man.**
- **Contemplation of heavenly truth, the eagle.**

REV 4:9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

10 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,

11 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.

Who is "Him that sat on the throne"? Notice this passage in Daniel:

DAN 7:9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. **10** A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: **thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him:** the judgment was set, and the books were opened....

13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, **one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.**

It is the Ancient of Days on the throne to whom Jesus comes near, and it is clearly God the Father that is the One sitting on the throne, because, as we will soon see, the Lamb will soon take the scroll from the One Who sits on the throne (Rev 5:5-7) just as prophesied by Daniel.⁷

The Scroll and the Lamb

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.

In Isaiah we find that because of their hardened hearts God closed the eyes of Israel, and they did not understand the words of their prophets.

ISA 29:8 It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion. **9** Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. **10** **For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.** **11** And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: **12** And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read

⁷ Walvoord, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, p. 115.

this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. 13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as **this people** draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but **have removed their heart far from me**, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

This is what Jesus was referring to in Matthew 15:7-8:

MAT 15:7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, **8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.**

Daniel was given a vision of the time of the end, but the time was yet future. He was therefore told to seal up the book.

DAN 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. **2** And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. **3** And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. **4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end:** many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

DAN 12:8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? **9** And he said, **Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**

Also we see in Daniel 8:26 a similar command.

DAN 8:26 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore **shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.**

It may be that the book of Revelation is the revealing of what was previously sealed in the Old Testament prophecies. Bullinger believed that this sealed book is the same that was sealed in Daniel chapter 12. In other words the prophecies of Revelation continue and expand the Book of Daniel.⁸

The scroll was the type of book depicted by this verse. It was made up of long strips of parchment. Certain documents such as wills required sealing. The wills of both Emperor Vaspasian and Caesar Augustus were each secured with seven wax seals.⁹

REV 5:2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, **Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?**

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

Because "Gabriel" means "strength of God" some believe that the "strong angel" mentioned in verse 2 is none other than Gabriel.¹⁰ Likewise, Gabriel ordered the sealing of the book in Daniel 8:26 and most likely in Daniel 12:4 and 9. It seems reasonable that it would be Gabriel who is the "strong angel" dealing with the opening of this book.

Hal Lindsey believes that the book, or scroll, represented the forfeiture to Satan of man's original inheritance from God. When a Jewish family was required to forfeit their property due to some financial distress, the property could not permanently be taken away. The family's losses were recorded on a scroll that was sealed seven times with the condition required for recovery of their property written on the outside. When a qualified redeemer could be found capable of meeting the conditions, the property was then required to be returned to the original owner.¹¹

⁸ Bullinger, COMMENTARY ON REVELATION, p. 233.

⁹ Lindsey, THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING, pp. 74, 75.

¹⁰ Duck, Richards, REVELATION: GOD'S WORD FOR THE BIBLICALLY-INEPT, p. 77.

¹¹ Lindsey, THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING, p. 75.

The Jamison, Fausset, and Brown commentary believes that the scroll represented the title deed of man's inheritance, which was usurped by Satan.¹² Henry Morris and John Phillips, believe it to be the title deed of the earth, to be redeemed by the kinsman redeemer as required by Jewish law. In the case of the original creation, this kinsman redeemer could only be Jesus Christ. No other could be found worthy, and without sin.¹³ Daymond Duck, and Hal Lindsey both agree that it represents a possession subject to the law for redemption of land. According to Daymond Duck, "When God created all things, [H]e gave earth to man, but Adam sinned and lost it to Satan. However, Adam is still a **joint heir** with Jesus, an adopted child of God. He [Jesus] is a Kinsman Redeemer--one who can buy back the earth and mankind. In Chapter 5 the Church is now in heaven, and we are in that period of time between the Rapture and the Tribulation Period. The question before us is, who qualifies to redeem Adam's lost property?"¹⁴ Ironside agrees that this scroll represented the "title deed to the world." He indicates that when the One that sat on the throne asked the question, "'Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?' it was just another way of saying, Who is the rightful heir? Who can say, 'I have title to break those seals, title to claim that world, it belongs to me?' Who is worthy to take possession of that world and subject it to himself?" Ironside goes on to ask, "Adam, what about you? Wasn't the world given to you? When God created you and placed you in the garden of Eden, did He not say that all of this was yours? Why do you not come forward and take this title deed and claim your property? Adam says, 'I forfeited my inheritance because of sin. It was mine, but I sinned it away. The devil cheated me out of it, and I no longer have any title to it.' Is there any angel who can step up and take the book? No, not an angel among all the serried ranks of Heaven's hosts can say, 'I have title to that world.' Not a man in all God's universe can say, 'It is mine.'"¹⁵

Charles C. Ryrie, in his *Basic Theology*, says, "Clearly the scriptures teach that Satan does have supreme authority over the cosmos. Of course, this is within the sovereign purpose of God and with His permission. Nevertheless, Satan's usurped authority over the cosmos is supreme. Our Lord recognized this when He called him the ruler of the world (John 12:31; 16:11) and when He did not dispute Satan's prerogative in offering Him the kingdoms of the world in the temptation (Matt. 4:8-9). The Apostle John acknowledged the same truth when he wrote that the whole cosmos lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19)." Ryrie further states, "When our Lord returns the cosmos kingdom of Satan will be replaced by the kingdom of Christ who will rule on this earth.... In the meantime God permits the rebellion to continue and the cosmos to flourish. His plan permits evil to run its course, and His long suffering permits many to come to the truth (Rom. 2:4)."¹⁶

The requirements for opening were specific, probably indicated on the outside of the scroll. The one to open it must be a man, not an angel, since it was man's lost estate that must be reclaimed. Also since sin was the cause of the loss of man's estate, no sinner could redeem it. The price required One of perfect holiness with His life being offered as a blood sacrifice, as a substitution for forgiveness of sins. No one around the throne could qualify except Jesus Christ.¹⁷

ROM 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

REV 5:5 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.

As in the case of legal documents, only someone with proper authority could have legal access to open the seals and read the message.¹⁸

*If no redeemer could be found to remove the curse, it meant that God's creation was forever consigned to remain in the hands of Satan.*¹⁹

Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, God's Lamb, paid the price with His shed blood, and is worthy. The One who was from the tribe of Judah, and a descendant of David, was to be the One worthy to open the scroll. He shall be from the tribe of Judah:

¹² Jamison, Fausset, and Brown, *A COMMENTARY, Revelation*, Vol. III, p. 674.

¹³ Morris, *THE DEFENDER'S STUDY BIBLE*, footnotes to Revelation chapter 5. Morris, *THE REVELATION RECORD*, pp. 96, 97. Phillips, *EXPLORING REVELATION*, pp. 87, 88.

¹⁴ Duck, *REVELATION--GOD'S WORD FOR THE BIBLICALLY INEPT*, pp. 75, 76, emphasis and underlines in original. Lindsey, *THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING*, p. 74-76.

¹⁵ Ironside, *REVELATION*, pp. 67-69.

¹⁶ Ryrie, *BASIC THEOLOGY*, pp. 152, 153.

¹⁷ Morris, *THE REVELATION RECORD*, p. 98.

¹⁸ Lindsey, *THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING*, p. 75.

¹⁹ W. A. Criswell, *EXPOSITORY SERMONS ON REVELATION*, as quoted in Lindsey, *THERE'S A NEW WORLD COMING*, p. 75.

GEN 35:23 The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and **Judah**, and Issachar, and Zebulun: **24** The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: **25** And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: **26** And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid: Gad, and Asher: **these are the sons of Jacob**, which were born to him in Padanaram.

He shall be the Lion of the tribe of Judah:

GEN 49:9 **Judah is a lion's whelp**: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? **10** **The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.**

He shall be from the root of David (Jesse):

ISA 11:1 **And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:**

No man is worthy:

ROM 3:10 As it is written, **There is none righteous, no, not one:...**
23 **For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;**

But One is worthy:

ROM 3:24 Being justified freely by his **grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins** that are past, through the forbearance of God; **26** **To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.**

REV 5:6 **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.**

John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God:

JOH 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, **Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**

Jesus was like a lamb led to the slaughter.

ISA 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: **he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter**, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Abraham was willing to sacrifice his only son (of the promise) to God. God was willing to send His only son as a sacrifice for the sin penalty of us all.

GEN 22:2 And he said, **Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of....**

10 And **Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.** **11** And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. **12** And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now **I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me....**

15 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, **16** And said, **By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17** **That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will**

multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; **18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.**

Horns symbolize power. Seven is the number of perfection. "Seven horns means that Jesus had omnipotent, perfect power."²⁰ Jesus said:

MAT 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

Seven eyes indicate perfect vision (all seeing). This indicates omniscience or all knowing (all seeing) vision.²¹ These eyes imply knowledge and intelligence. Jesus is the resurrected all-powerful savior of men. Again we see mentioned the seven virtues of the Holy Spirit being the nature of Jesus.

ISA 11:2 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;

REV 5:7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.
8 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.

Notice that Daniel recorded the same event:²²

DAN 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, **one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.** **14** And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

According to J. Dwight Pentecost these elders are associated with a priestly act, which is never said of angels. Therefore they must be believers associated with the Great High Priest. **Since Israel is not resurrected until the end of Daniel's seventieth week, and not judged or rewarded until the coming of the Lord** it follows that these elders represent the church and that the Rapture has occurred in Revelation 4:1 and 2.²³

ISA 26:19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and **the earth shall cast out the dead.** **20** Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: **hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.** **21** For, behold, **the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity:** the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

DAN 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and **there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered,** every one that shall be found written in the book. **2** And **many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.**

That it is the Church represented is reinforced by the fact that they know the Lamb, they are close to Him, and they worship Him. Jesus prayed that His sheep would know Him.²⁴ That they worship both the One on the throne (the Father) and the Lamb proves that the Lamb (Jesus) is God.²⁵

²⁰ Duck, Richards, REVELATION: GOD'S WORD FOR THE BIBLICALLY-INEPT, p. 78.

²¹ Duck, Richards, REVELATION: GOD'S WORD FOR THE BIBLICALLY-INEPT, p. 78.

²² Morris, THE REVELATION RECORD, p. 101.

²³ Pentecost, THINGS TO COME, A Study in Eschatology, p. 209.

²⁴ Pentecost, THINGS TO COME, A Study in Eschatology, p. 258.

²⁵ Levy, REVELATION: Hearing the Last Word, p. 83.

JOH 17:3 And this is life eternal, **that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ,** whom thou hast sent....

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and **these have known that thou hast sent me.**

In the last lesson, someone asked, "What about those Old Testament saints who were resurrected at the time of Jesus' resurrection; could they be the elders?"

Matt 27:52 And the **graves were opened;** and **many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53** And came out of the graves **after his resurrection,** and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

The majority of the commentaries that I have consulted in this regard are almost unanimous in affirming that the elders represent only Church believers. One commentary believes that it is a mixture of the Church and Old Testament saints. In any case, they all affirm that it does represent the Church, either partially or wholly. No commentator that I know of has any information regarding these "saints" other than what is revealed by Matthew chapter 27.

"Golden vials full of odours" may be translated "golden bowls full of incense."

REV 5:9 And 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;

10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Those that see the rapture occurring a time other than pre-tribulation, such as mid, pre-wrath or post, must in some way deal with these elders. Some choose to ignore them and some choose to explain them away with an assumption; for example – they say that they are not speaking of themselves when they refer to "every kindred [tribe], and tongue, and people, and nation." But, this is an assumption not supported by Scripture, and those that must use that argument cannot legitimately use Scripture when making that assumption.

Dressed in "white linen," wearing "crowns," and sitting on "thrones" are all promises to the church in the immediate context of Revelation chapters 2 and 3. This immediate context clearly defines the idea that these elders are indeed the Church in heaven.

Some argue that the Church is so intimately bound to Jesus Christ that the absence of Jesus Christ in Revelation chapter 4 proves that the elders cannot be the Church. I would comment that chapter 4 is setting the stage for the Lamb to receive the scroll in chapter 5. Chapter 5 only indicates no one is found worthy except the Lamb, not that the Lamb is missing. Chapter 5 is thus the appropriate time for the identification of the worthiness of the Lamb. To introduce the Lamb in chapter 4 would destroy the impact of the meaning of chapter 5.

Finally, we are told to be ever watchful for our Lord's return. This is reinforced by many Scriptures in the New Testament. We are never told to watch for the appearing of the Antichrist. If, as some believe, that the rapture is to be at a time other than pre-tribulation, then it would cause us to look for the Antichrist rather than Jesus Christ. I don't believe that is what Scripture is asking believers to do.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and **the glorious appearing** of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

The elders sang a new song that reinforces that they represent the Church now in Heaven since they describe themselves as being redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Again we see that believers are to be kings and priests, and will reign on the earth.

REV 1:6 And **hath made us kings and priests** unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Peter clearly refers to the Church believers as "a royal priesthood."

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, **a royal priesthood,** an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath **called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:**

The word redeemed carries the idea of purchased with a price.²⁶ Newer Bible versions such as the NIV and NASB using corrupt manuscripts change the meaning to general terms allowing those redeemed to be "men" rather than "us." This allows the elders to go unidentified. John Walvoord indicates that "manuscript evidence in support of the King James Version in verses 9-10 gives considerable support to the concept that the KJV is actually the best manuscript."²⁷ The Word "us" (hemas) is in the Greek text of the King James Version (the majority text).²⁸ Support for the corrupt rendering is given in the minority of the manuscripts and in the Greek text of the NIV, NASB, and other modern versions supported by the preferential scholarship of Westcott, Hort, and other liberal scholars.²⁹

REV 5:11 And 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;

12 Saying 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.

In contrast to the singing of the elders we now see an uncountable number of angels joining in with their voices. All those in Heaven join in the worship of the Lamb that was slain.³⁰ The Lamb receives power.

MAT 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

REV 5:13 And 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.

14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

All of God's creation praises him.

PSA 148:1 **Praise ye the LORD.** Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. **2** Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. **3** Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. **4** Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. **5** Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created. **6** He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. **7** Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: **8** Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word: **9** Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: **10** Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: **11** Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: **12** Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: **13** Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven. **14** He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. **Praise ye the LORD.**

There is evidence that the last five chapters of Psalms referred to this scene in Heaven around the throne of God.³¹ Notice the beginning and ending of this group of Psalms.

PSA 146:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. **2** **While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.**

PSA 150:6 **Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.** Praise ye the LORD.

²⁶ Barnes, NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT: REVELATION, p. 128.

²⁷ Walvoord, THE PROPHECY KNOWLEDGE HANDBOOK, p. 549.

²⁸ Jay P. Green, Sr., THE INTERLINEAR HEBREW-GREEK-ENGLISH BIBLE, Hendrickson, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1984, 1985, by The Trinitarian Bible Society, London, England, Vol. IV, pp. 665, 666.

²⁹ Bullinger, COMMENTARY ON REVELATION, p. 242.

³⁰ Walvoord, THE PROPHECY KNOWLEDGE HANDBOOK, pp. 549, 550. Barnes, NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT: REVELATION, p. 129.

³¹ Morris, THE REVELATION RECORD, p. 106.