

# Heaven Is A Place...

## Revelation 4

### April 19, 2026

Please open your Bible to Revelation 4. We're going to take a break from Genesis for a few Sundays to talk about some topics that should be front and center on everyone's mind. Say heaven. You heard about the pastor who asked his people whoever wanted to go to heaven to raise their hand. Everyone did except Joe. The pastor asked him, "Don't you want to go to heaven, Joe?" To which Joe replied, "Are you getting up a load right now?"

We laugh about that but I hope that by the end of our time together today, you'll eagerly raise your hand even if God is a getting up a load right now. If you are able, please stand as we read about heaven from Rev 4: After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. 3 And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. 4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. 6 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. 8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: 11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

Say God. Heaven is all about God. That should go without saying, but we must say it for some people tend to dwell on golden streets and mansions. If those are what you're looking forward to **most** about heaven, you may not get there, for that may indicate that money and possessions are your gods. Because God is in heaven, everything else of value will be there also, but they are all so far secondary as to not even be noticed. It takes John 21 chapters to get to those things. Here in chapter 4, he is privileged to visit heaven and the very first thing he saw was the One sitting on the throne who lives forever

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and ever. God the Father sits on heaven's throne and He is the center of all heaven! The closest John could get to describing Him was to use the most beautiful and expensive jewels from earth. Surrounded by rainbows with lightning coming out from Him. Bright bursts of intense light. I wish I could share some slides with you today. John apparently didn't snap any photos except in his mind.

Say light. Ps 104:2 says, "[God] wraps Himself in light as with a garment," and Hab 3:4 declares, "His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand." Few things on earth are any more spectacular or beautiful than a sunrise! I've been enjoying some great ones in the turkey woods. God's splendor is akin to that! When Jesus was transfigured, Matt 17:2 tells us, "His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light." Luke says (9:29), "His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning." In 1 Tim 6:16, Paul tells us, God, "lives in unapproachable light," and 1 John 1:5-6 says, "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all." When John saw the glorified Christ in Rev 1:16, He said, "His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance," and at the end of this grand book, he tells us in Rev 22:5. "They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun (in heaven), for the Lord God will give them light." God is light and God is bright! And He's going to light up all of Heaven! Jesus' claim, "I am the light of the world," is more than metaphor!

I will supplement the Scriptures today with some accounts from Lee Strobel's book, Seeing the Supernatural. In it he tells that many people who have died clinically and were later resuscitated report a brilliant light brighter than anything they had ever seen. "Unspeakably bright, brighter than the sun, more radiant than any diamond, brighter than a laser beam," they say, and yet, they also say, "You could look right into it." On earth, human eyes can not look at God's full glory, but in heaven, we shall!

John also refers to the Spirit and in the next chapter, He talks about the Lamb that looks as though it **had** been slain. Who's He talking about? Jesus! God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit are all in heaven. The unity of the Godhead. Friend, if you don't like God, heaven's not for you. For those who hate God or they could take or leave Him, they've never really understood Him. For when we do, we will want nothing else and nothing more for there is nothing more than God. He's enough.

John also describes beings that are worship leaders in heaven. Say worship. Because God is there and because His created beings and people are there, they all worship Him. They can't help it. John also sees 24 elders and in Rev 5, he sees ten thousand times ten thousand angels. And guess what all of these are all doing? Worshipping God, the center of all Heaven! The elders fall before Him. The four living

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creatures never stop saying, “Holy, Holy, Holy...” The angels sing praise to God and to the Lamb.

Friend, because heaven is all about God, it is a place of worship. If you don't like worship on earth, you're going to hate heaven. Actually, we all love to worship. We were made to do it. Sometimes it happens in church, sometimes in nature, sometimes other places, but when we truly worship, we love it! But, not everyone worships God. Whatever we give the most worth to, we worship and anything other than God will leave us empty. But when we begin to comprehend who God is and when we truly worship Him as He is, we love it! Heaven is a place of wondrous worship.

Heaven is also a place of overwhelming joy. Say joy. Complete, total, perfect joy. On earth we have misery, sadness, pain-physically and emotionally. There will be none of that in heaven! Because no sickness can exist in God's presence, there is none in heaven. Nothing out of line. No stress from jobs or family or church. Stress is a joy killer! No dread of deadlines or due dates or bills. Rev 21:4 “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." Heaven is a place of Joy!

With the joy, there will also be peace! Say peace. All is peace forevermore, on that happy golden shore, what a day, glorious day, that will be! Mic 4:3 says “They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.” So there will be peace between peoples but also peace in people's hearts. Peace that passes understanding. Believers who died and came back talked about the overwhelming sense of peace and calm they felt in the presence of the bright Light. No more angst. No more pits in your stomach or lumps in your throat. No more clouds hanging over your mind. Why would you not want to go right now, Joe?

The Bible also describes heaven as a place of beauty. Say beauty. Most people who were caught up to heaven in Strobel's book tell of unbelievable beauty. Beauty they can't put into words. Colors more vibrant than anything here. I remember Shirley Patton talking about her aunt Gerty, who, as she lay dying said, “The flowers are beautiful!” Strobel says that is common and, “Scenery that takes your breath away... colors like nothing on earth. One person said the colors seem to be alive.” They often describe smells that are sweeter and more delicious than any here. And if **that's** true, imagine how the food's gonna taste! Jesus talked about the great banquet in heaven and Revelation 19 depicts the marriage supper of the Lamb! All metaphors? I don't think so. J. Oswald

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Sanders has written a book called Heaven, Better By Far! And it is! Better in every way! Better in beauty!

Now here's the amazing thing. Strobel reports that even though people mention the beauty, the smells, the colors, the scenery, they add something like, "I didn't even care about all that because I couldn't take my eyes off Jesus. He's beyond beautiful! He's everything I ever longed for." Researcher John Burke who Strobel quotes says, "Everything I've ever enjoyed in life—the beauty of the outdoors, the love of a parent, the laughter of a child, the fulfillment of marriage—all of that is just a speck compared to the greater reality that's found in Jesus!" Oh my friends, how awesome is that? David says in Ps 27:4, "**One thing** I ask of the Lord, **this** is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple." I'm ready to get on that load right now! How about you?

Heaven is also a place of rest. Say rest. Rev 14:13 says we will rest from our labors. That doesn't mean we won't have anything to do. We will. Not sitting on clouds playing harps. I believe we will have heavenly occupations, but they won't require labor. Adam and Eve had tasks to do in a perfect world before the Fall. Those tasks became laborious after sin entered. Some of you are blessed with jobs that on some days, it doesn't even seem like work. But I doubt any of us have jobs that never seem like work. But so it will be in heaven. It will be rest from strenuous physical, mental, and emotional labor. Rest from the heavy lifting of life. The Bible teaches that eventually, God will make a new heaven, or sky, and a new earth. So our eternal residence will be on the restored earth. The early Christians believed God will do for the entire creation what He did for Jesus on Easter morning. And there will be plenty for us to enjoy doing. You'll never be bored! I guarantee it! It will be exquisitely wonderful and it will be so forever!

Heaven is also a place of perfect love. Say love. Most of us have experienced true love somewhere in life. For some it may have been a parent, for others a spouse, or perhaps from a close friend or sibling. If you've known all of these, you have been truly blessed. But all of that is only a foretaste of glory divine. Just an appetizer of what the main course is going to be like in heaven where the God, who is love, allows us to dwell with Him. God is love and He is there! This too is something people have reported. They felt more loved and accepted in the brief time they were there than in their whole earthly existence. So wonderfully embraced by a beautiful Being that transcends all and everything.

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The presence of God is so wonderful, it's where we all want to be forever. Remember how Peter, James and John felt when they saw Jesus transformed with Moses and Elijah? It felt so good, Peter said, let me build three huts right here right now so we never have to leave! A little later, Jesus promised Peter and the others at the Last Supper that He was going to do just that! To go get a place ready for them, and us. Think of it. The Master Carpenter building your eternal home right now! Actually the better understanding is He's building us a room in the Father's House so we can stay close to Him forever! And if Jesus created all this beauty on earth in 6 days, imagine what heaven will be like that He's been preparing for 2000 years!

In 2 Cor 12, Paul said he knew a man who had been caught up to the third heaven. The atmosphere around the earth is the first heaven, space is the second, and God's presence is the third. Most commentators believe Paul was modestly talking about himself. But he says, that this person was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things that man is not permitted to tell. Too wonderful. Too amazing. Too incredible. And of course, if in fact it was Paul, and I believe it was, it lends credence to what He says about how God dwells in unapproachable light, etc.

Heaven has always been the blessed hope of the believer. What we look forward to more than everything else. Sadly, life has gotten too comfortable for many of us on earth and really that's a pretty recent phenomenon. Historically, Christians have not had much, have not been well treated, have not had freedom to pray or worship, and have not had very good lives. And for many Christians in the world, it's still that way right now. They have no problem getting on a load right now. As John writes, even so come Lord Jesus. But we have it so good, so healthy, so wealthy, we want God to wait so we can enjoy this or that, do this or that, or spend more time with this one or that one, failing to grasp how far better heaven is than anything we can do, experience or know here. We are not to rush our exit from this life before God's time, but we need not fear death! If we're Christians, we should not dread it, either for ourselves or for our saved loved ones. Not to delay it at all costs. This life is not the end! The Bible has told us this for thousands of years, now researchers are telling us that too! There's a better home a waitin' in the sky, Lord, in the sky.

Bro Henry Elsea tells the story of a wall in a horrid Haitian jail where some imprisoned believer had scrawled, "Jesus is coming soon!" Our Nigerian, North Korean, and Iranian brothers are counting on it! Their best life is not now. It is not heaven on earth for them, it's Hell on earth. But they know heaven is coming and so they endure knowing that they will reap if they faint not. Some of you may feel like them. You may

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be overwhelmed by where you are in life. By sin, by sickness, by sadness. Don't rush it, but if you know Jesus, hang in there, Heaven is coming!

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he wrote, (1 Cor 2:9-10) "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"— 10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit." So we are able to get a few glimpses of heaven. As I said the other week, if He told us everything about it, people would be jumping off tall buildings to get there. No longer from just the Bible, but also from these other experiences, God has something unspeakably wonderful in store for all those who know and love Him. In Phil 1:23 Paul says, "I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far." He had tasted enough that He was ready to go on that first load. But knew He was still needed here for a time. And if you are still alive, God has a purpose and a plan for you too even if you don't understand it. Just be faithful.

Heaven is a real place. Heaven is a wonderful place because it's where our wonderful God is! It's a place of worship, joy, peace, beauty, rest, and love. So with all of this in mind, Paul advises Christians in Col 3:1-2 ... set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." And the more we do, the more eager we'll be to get on the quickest load we can!

Finally, not everyone will go there. Jesus was clear about that too. Only those who trust in Him. Who ask Him to forgive their sin and save them through His shed blood. His offer is open to all, but you must choose Him before you die. Be sure you are ready—only one way and that's Jesus. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. And if you are prepared, praise God, but be sure to tell others so you can take as many of them with you as possible! Why wouldn't we want everyone to go with us? Next week hell and some experienced that as well.