

PULPIT NOTES

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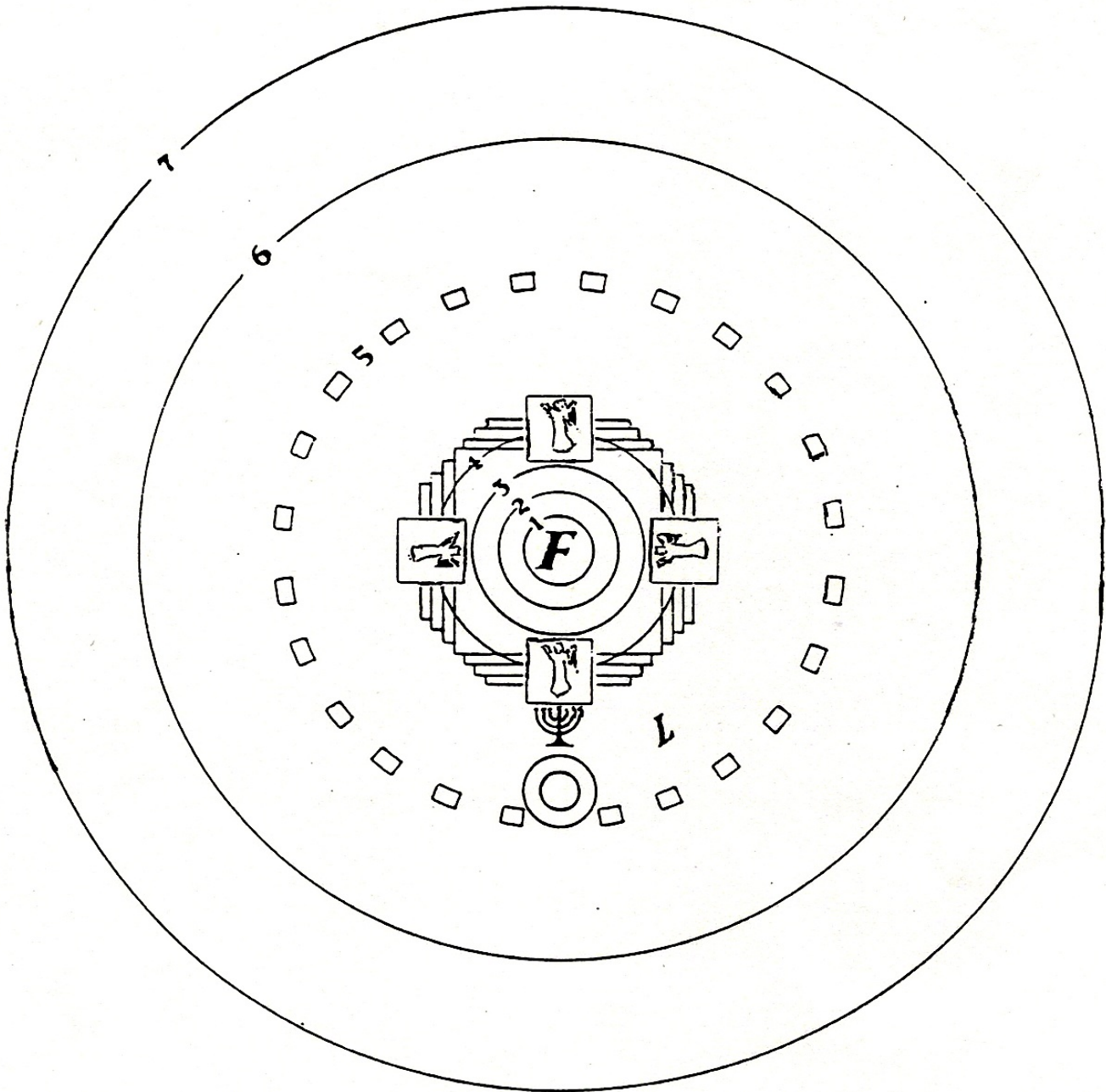
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HOLY, HOLY HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY

1. "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven" (4:1).
 - a. Ezekiel 1:1 "Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God."
2. "*And the first voice was as it were of a trumpet*" (4:1).
 - a. This is the same voice as in (1:10). It is the voice of Christ.
 - b. The voice tells him to come up to the throne. John does not literally go up to the throne, but what he does is has a VISION of the throne.
 - c. John is being invited to see the history of the world or rather the events and happenings on the earth from the throne perspective. This is the only way that we can really understand the tribulations and all that happens to the earth.
3. "*I will shew thee things which must be hereafter*" (4:1)
 - a. John will see things that will be in the future.
4. Though the various objects which John beholds do not exist in the physical, material form, they express an important, spiritual truth. They teach one main lesson. Let us not lose ourselves in detail-interpretation: let us not try to find a "deeper meaning" when there is none. Chapters four and five teach one main lesson. **The picture is ONE; the lesson is ONE.**
5. These chapters do not merely give us a picture of heaven, they describe the **ENTIRE CREATION FROM THE ASPECT OF HEAVEN**. The purpose of this vision is to show us, in beautiful symbolism, that all things are governed by the Throne-Occupant. **ALL** things. Hence, also our trials and tribulations. *The point is that God knows about the struggles we are in.*
6. "*Behold, a THRONE*" (4:2). The most important thing in this entire vision is the **throne**. Notice throughout the vision that everything is described in respect to the throne. The entire creation has as its center the THRONE of God. This is a vital understanding. When John begins to see the things which must be hereafter, he first sees the throne. Nothing is excluded from the dominion of the throne.
7. John's description of the throne is not unlike Ezekiel's.
 - a. Ezekiel 1:26-28 "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. 27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. 28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake."
8. The real message of this whole vision is not in what everyone looks like, but in what they are saying, "**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is and is to come.**" John tells us "and they rest not day and night" making this acclamation.
9. We could speculate all day on the 24 elders, but let us not fail to hear what they say. They "fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

ALL CREATION GOVERNED BY THE THRONE
It is one single picture. It teaches one main lesson.



The square in the center represents the Throne with steps leading up to it. In the center of the Throne sits the Father, Revelation 4:2.

- 1. The Throne of God.
- 2. The lightening, thundering and voices.
- 3. The emerald rainbow, 4:3.
- 4. The four beasts or living ones full of eyes, 4:6.
- 5. The four and twenty elders with crowns of gold, 4:4.
- 6. The many angels about the Throne, 5:11.
- 7. Every other creature, 5:13.

Notice also the seven lamps of fire, the sea of glass before the Throne, 4:5,6. The "L" represents the Lamb. Finally, observe that the Lamb is standing between the Throne and the living ones on the one side, and the four and twenty elders on the other, 5:6. The lamb, however, did not remain there. He advanced to the Throne, 5:7, and - symbolically speaking, of course - is now seated upon it together with the Father, 22:1.

Take another look at this diagram. Notice: The throne rules over all! TAKE THIS LESSON TO HEART.

12. Revelation 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 the right hand of God there is a book. We will come to see in chapters 6 and 7 the contents of this book. But that we might better understand chapter 5, let me just briefly say that this book represents God's plan, his decree which is all comprehensive.
 - It symbolizes God's purpose with respect to the ENTIRE universe THROUGHOUT history, and concerning ALL creatures in ALL ages and unto all eternity. We cannot learn this from chapter 5, we can only learn this from the opening of the seals that are on the book when we get to chapters 6 and 7.
13. Now, this book is here pictured as being entirely sealed with seven seals. If the book remains closed, then God's plan will be left unexecuted. To open the book by breaking the seals means not merely to reveal, but to carry out God's plan. The strong angel in heaven knows that the book must be opened and proclaims, *"who is worthy to open the book, an to loose the seals thereof?"* (5:2).
14. **No one, absolutely no one in existence, living or dead was able to open the book** (5:3).
15. John is then found to be weeping. The book must be opened. We will understand the meaning of these tears if we constantly bear in mind that in this beautiful vision the opening of the book by breaking the seals indicated the execution of God's plan.
16. (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."* [Genesis 49:8-10]. **This is Jesus!** In conquering Satan and bearing the full burden of the wrath of God to the uttermost, he proved himself to be, indeed, the lion. On the cross this Lion of Juda, this Root of David, had conquered and thereby earned the right to open the book and to break the seals, that is, to rule all that exists in accordance with God's plan.
17. The elder said, "behold, the Lion," but when John looks, he does not see a lion, on the contrary, he sees a Lamb. [Isaiah 53]
- John 1:26,29 "John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 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."
 - Acts 8:32 "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:"
 - 1 Peter 1:19 "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"
18. Jesus has before said, "all authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth," and now John sees that this is the case. Jesus has all authority to rule the universe according to God's eternal purpose.
- Philippians 2:6-11 "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
 - Hebrews 2:5-18 "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak . . . thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him . . . we see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour . . . that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
19. No sooner has the Lamb taken the scroll, and thus accepted the office of king of all, than there is a great burst of triumph and exuberant joy.
- First, those closest to the throne - (four living creatures, 24 elders). They sing 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 (tribe), and tongue (linguistic), and people (social), and nation (political); 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (5:9-10).
 - Second, the many angels.** Revelation 5:11-12 "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."
 - Third, every creature.** Revelation 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."
 - And the four living ones said, "Amen."**