

230402-1 Re 5, Seeing God on His Throne Precedes John's View of Future Things, Pt. 2–CThurman

The apostle John was exiled to the isle of Patmos on account of the word of God and his witness of Jesus Christ. He was in the spirit of God, that is, John was shown things and told things by the Spirit of God on the Lord's day. (cf. Re.1.10) He not only saw an image of one like the Son of man and wonderful things about Him, but he also heard His voice speaking to him. At this the Lord commanded John to write *the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter*. (cf. Re.1.19) So John wrote what he saw of the things concerning the likeness of the Son of man. This is the first part of the three divisions of the Book of Revelation, *the things which thou hast seen*.

Then, in chs. 2, 3, the Lord Jesus continued to tell John things concerning the present state of the seven churches. So John wrote what those things, *the things which are*, which is the second division of the Book of Revelation. But it is at chapter 4 that John saw a door opened in heaven and was commanded to come up in spirit.

Chapters 4, 5 prepare John for the last division of the Book of Revelation. These things that he writes of are *the things which shall be hereafter*, future things. The 4th chapter begins with John immediately being transported in his spirit into glory. In this place he sees the brilliant light of the Heavenly Father sitting upon His throne, and hears what is the great sound of the Holy Spirit coming out of that throne. All around God on His throne are four and twenty elders, wearing gold crowns and white garments, each sitting upon their own thrones. Before God's throne is a vast expanse of a sea of glass, like crystal. In the midst the throne and all around it are four unique living creatures, one having the face like a lion, another, like a calf, another had the face of a man, and another had a face like a flying eagle, and each beast had six wings and were full of eyes before, behind and within. And *when* these four living creatures begin to give ceaseless praise to God, then the twenty-four elders cast their crowns before the throne of God proclaiming,

Re 4:11 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.

I am left with the sense that this praise has not yet begun; that it is yet future.

In the 5th chapter this heavenly scene continues as the Lord Jesus prepares John for the revelation of *the things which shall be hereafter*. This chapter reveals to John and to all of the *churches* how it was that the Lord Jesus came to receive this revelation from the Father; because as the Son of Man He has prevailed over sin and death and is worthy to take the book and loose the seals so that His people might be blessed in reading, hearing and keeping of the things that are written in it.

Chapter 5

εἶδον,

1 ¶ And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne

(John)

(So, in the right hand of the Heavenly Father.)

I saw, εἶδον, 1s. aor. of ὁράω, to see. vss. 1, 2, 6, 11.

a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

sealed up

written, γεγραμμένον, acc. sing. neut. part. pres. pass. of the verb γράφω, tss. to write, to describe (1),

sealed, κατεσφραγισμένον, acc. sing. neut. part. perf. pass. of the verb κατασφραγίζω, up + to seal; only this once in the NT, and meaning 'sealed up.'

seals, σφραγῖσιν, dat. pl. of the noun σφραγίς, always tss. with the English to seal.

1 Καὶ εἶδον ἐπὶ τὴν δεξιὰν τοῦ καθημένου ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου βιβλίον γεγραμμένον ἔσωθεν καὶ ὀπισθεν κατεσφραγισμένον σφραγῖσιν ἑπτὰ

εἶδον, v.1

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice,

mighty, powerful

strong, ἰσχυρὸν, acc. sing. masc. of the adj. ἰσχυρός, tss. *strong, boisterous, mighty, powerful, valiant.*

proclaiming, κηρύσσοντα, acc. sing. masc. part. pres. act. of the verb κηρύσσω, tss. *to preach, to publish, to proclaim.*

Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?
fit destroy, put off

worthy, ἄξιος, an adj. tss. *meet, worthy, due reward; vss.2, 4, 9, 12.*

to open, ἀνοίξαι, aor. infin. of the verb ἀνοίγω, tss. always with the English *to open.*

to loose, λῦσαι, aor. infin. of the verb λύω, tss. *to break, to loose, to put off, to melt, to dissolve, to destroy.*

a strong angel – Very likely the strongest of the angels of God so that none but the most able of creation might approach to open the book and to loose its seals. There are other mighty angels. (cf. Re.10.1; 18.21)

Whoever it is that would take the book from the right hand of the Father must be equal to the task. He must be a fit man in order to take it from the right hand of God, open it and to loose its seals.

2 καὶ εἶδον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν κηρύσσοντα φωνῇ μεγάλῃ Τίς ἐστὶν ἄξιος ἀνοίξαι τὸ βιβλίον καὶ λῦσαι τὰς σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ

ἐν	ἐπὶ	ὑποκάτω
3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth,		
one	upon	beneath

under, ὑποκάτω, adv. by, under, among + under, down, bottom, beneath, always tss. with the English *under.*

was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

was able, ἠδύνατο, 3s. imperf. of the verb δύναμαι, tss. to be able, to have power, to be possible, can, might.

to look, βλέπειν, pres. infin. of the Greek verb βλέπω, to see, to look, to beware, to heed, to regard, to behold. (vss.3, 4)

Again, notice that all revelation is dependent on the will of God. The Spirit of God is especially instructing those within the context of a NT church.

Joh 14:17 [Even] the Spirit of truth (The Comforter, v.16); whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

...

26 But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

3 καὶ οὐδεὶς ἠδύνατο ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς ἀνοῖξαι τὸ βιβλίον οὐδὲ βλέπειν αὐτό

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

wept, ἔκλαιον, 1s. imperf. of κλαίω, tss. to weep (38), bewail (1).

was found, εὐρέθη, 3s. aor. pass. of the verb εὐρίσκω, tss. to find, to get, to obtain, to perceive.

to read, ἀναγνῶναι, aor. infin. of the verb ἀναγινώσκω, again, re-, new + to know; ἀναγινώσκω is always tss. with the English to read.

John, whose body was on the isle of Patmos was raised in his spirit into glory to see such wonderful things. And suddenly the revelation of future things is going going to be shut down before it even begins BECAUSE no

one is worthy to take the Book from the right hand of God. At this he was caused to weep much. Imagine the height of anticipatory joy to which John was raised suddenly vanquished because there's not a man in ALL of creation of such worth before God to receive this Book of the Revelation.

4 καὶ ἐγὼ ἔκλαιον πολλὰ, ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἄξιος εὐρέθη ἀνοῖξαι καὶ ἀναγνῶναι τὸ βιβλίον οὔτε βλέπειν αὐτό

5 And one of the elders saith unto me,
(four and twenty)

The scene of the beasts and the elders, their perspective of futures appears to be as if they are already done. This elder knows of one that is able.

Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda,

Lion of the tribe of Judah – We know that the Scriptures tell that Satan is *as a roaring lion*, like a lion, mimicking a lion. But the Lamb IS the lion, a metaphor ...

Pr 30:30 A lion [which is] strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any ...

Nu 23:21 He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God [is] with him, and the shout of a king [is] among them.

...

24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat [of] the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

This One is descended from the tribe of Judah, the kingly lineage.

Ge 49:10 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].

To David the LORD sent Nathan the prophet to tell him that his seed would be established forever upon the throne.

2Sa.7.12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

...

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

The genealogies show that the Lord Jesus is descended of Judah and through David. (cf. Mt.1.1, 2, 6, 16; Lk.3.23, 30, 31)

the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. overcome

root, ῥίζα, a noun and always tss. root (17).

hath prevailed, ἐνίκησεν, 3s. aor. of the verb νικάω, tss. to overcome, to prevail, to conquer, to get the victory.

root of David –

Is.11.1 ¶ And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

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 ...

hath prevailed – He overcame, not for Himself, but for us. He overcame to sit upon His throne so that we might sit with Him when that time comes. (cf. Re.3.21) To prevail means that He died to put away God's justice against us for sin. Having done this He then raised from the dead. He can die no more. He lives forever. It was at this time when the Lord Jesus proclaimed ...

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

He has the power to take the book, to open it, and to loose its seal.

1Co.15.24 Then [cometh] the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

5 καὶ εἷς ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λέγει μοι Μὴ κλαῖε ἰδοῦ, ἐνίκησεν ὁ λέων ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰούδα ἡ ρίζα Δαβίδ, ἀνοῖξαι τὸ βιβλίον καὶ λῦσαι τὰς ἑπτὰ σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ

εἶδον, v.1

6 ¶ And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, saw

and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, was set, established

Lamb, ἀρνίον, a noun always tss. with the English lamb.

stood, ἐστηκός, nom. sing. neut. part. perf. of the verb ἵστημι, tss. to appoint, to establish, to set, to stand, etc.

it had been slain, ἐσφαγμένον, nom. sing. neut. part. perf. pass. of the verb σφραγίζω,

This One John had seen before!

John had seen these marks which resulted in killing the blessed Lord. He had seen these when the Lord Jesus had presented Himself alive from the dead to all of the disciples.

Lk.24.39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them [his] hands and [his] feet.

Joh 20:27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust [it] into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

He that was slain, that had received the mortal wounds, these which he bore in that heavenly scene was alive. The sense of the Revelation text is that it was for these wounds that the Lamb received, taking our place to bear our sins that He was counted worthy. He was already worthy in Himself being the Son of God, but He is worthy as the Son of man or the Lamb of God so that this book might be opened in behalf of His redeemed.

having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

horns, κέρατα, acc. pl. of the noun κέρας, always tss. with the English horn.

eyes, of the noun οφθαλμός, tss. sight (oft), sight, (1).

At least twice now in the Book of Revelation confirmed the doctrine of the Triunity of the Persons of the Godhead, the Trinity, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (cf. Re.1.4, 5, 6; 5.1, 6, 7) The Book of Revelation is also a Doctrinal book.

6 Καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰδοῦ, ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἀρνίον ἐστηκὸς ὡς ἐσφαγμένον ἔχον κέρατα ἑπτὰ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς ἑπτὰ οἳ εἰσὶν τὰ ἑπτὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματα τὰ ἀπεσταλμένα εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν

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

he came, ἦλθεν, 3s. aor. of the verb ἔρχομαι, tss. to come, to light [upon], to go, to fall out

took, εἴληφεν, 3s. perf. of the verb λαμβάνω, tss. to take away, to take, to receive, to hold, to come on, to catch, to bring, to accept, to attain.

Remember how we read that God had given to Jesus Christ this revelation?

Re.1.1 ¶ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him ...

And now we know how it was that Christ *took* or *received* this book from His Father; because He was worthy, having prevailed over sin and death for us.

This Book of Revelation appears to be a compilation of things that the Old Testament prophets were commanded to write. (i.e., cf. Is.30.8-26, *note it in a book*; Jer.30.1-9, *Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book*; Dan.12.4, *seal up the book, even to the time of the end ...*)

It was the will of God that we receive this book of future things. We received the other books of the Bible, but this is unique. Even with the OT prophets the things revealed there are difficult to discern exactly what might be future. This revelation opens those parts of the prophets up more clearly. The Book of Revelation, until chapter 20, covers a period of seven years in which is the preservation of the people of God, the judgment upon the earth, and the time of the first resurrection. After chapter 19 follows the millennial kingdom, the last resurrection, the everlasting destruction of the unbelieving and the righteous coming to their eternal home, the new heavens and earth. No other NT book is so concerned with last things as is this book, Revelation.

7 καὶ ἦλθεν καὶ εἴληφεν τὸ βιβλίον ἐκ τῆς δεξιᾶς τοῦ καθημένου ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb,

had taken, ἔλαβεν, 3s. aor. of the verb λαμβάνω; see above.

fell down, ἔπεσον, 1s. aor. of πίπτω, tss. to fall, to fall down, to fail.

The first instance recorded that the four and twenty elders fell down before the throne of the Father was in Re.4.9, 10.

*Re.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 ...*

Every scene, there are six, where these elders are mentioned together they fall down before God to worship. Here they fall down before the Lamb to worship. That they do this shows that they have equal regard for they have for both the Father and the Son, that God the Father and the Lamb of God are equally God and worthy to be worshipped.

Joh 10:30 I and [my] Father are one.

Phl.2.6 Who (Christ Jesus, v.5), 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 ...

having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours,

bowls properly here 'incense(s)'
censers

having, ἔχοντες, nom. pl. masc. part. pres. of the verb ἔχω, tss. to have, to hold, to retain, to be with, to recover, to be able, to keep, etc.

each one of them, ἕκαστος, pronominal adj. tss. any, both, each, each one, every, every man, every one, every woman, particularly.

harps, of the noun κιθάρα, always (4) in the NT harps.

vials, of the noun **φιάλη**, always (12) tss. in the NT *vials*; in the LXX, tss. bowls or cups; in the OT this is called a *censer*.

*Lev.16.12 And he shall take a **censer** full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil:*

13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD (which is in the censer), that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not:

14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

full, γεμούσας, acc. pl. fem. part. pres. of the verb **γέμω**, always tss. *to be full*; the idea is to be laden or burdened.

odours, θυμιάτων, gen. pl. of the noun **θυμίαμα**, tss. *incense* (4), *odours* (2).

	εἶσιν		
which	are	the prayers of	saints.
incense(s)	3pl. pres. (the type for incense explained as)		holy (ones)

saints, ἁγίων, gen. pl. of the adj. **ἅγιος**, tss.

So the place where John's spirit is, is holy. There the 28 heavenly men have their harps and golden censers burning incense before the LORD. It is a holy place, a sanctuary.

In the OT only vessels of gold were used in the service of the sanctuary, the first division inside of the OT tabernacle. Any priest of the sons of Aaron would have taken live (hot) coals from off of the brazen altar and then put those into his golden censer (vial). With his hands full of incense he would come into the sanctuary, put the coals into the altar of incense and then lay

the ordained mixture of spices to send up a pleasant fragrance before the LORD. Once a year the High Priest would do much the same except on this occasion he would lay the mixture of incense on the coals while they were in his censer and then he would enter into the holiest of all, the second division to the tabernacle that was behind the veil. And the room would be filled with the sweet fragrance and with a cloud of smoke, all representing Christ's intercessions for us. Here in our text the smoke of the incense is explained as the prayers of the saints.

Every one of them, every one of the four beasts and every one of the four and twenty elders have harps and vials (censers) full of incenses.

In the Old Testament these are called *censers*. (cf. Nu.16.17, brass censers)

8 καὶ ὅτε ἔλαβεν τὸ βιβλίον τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα καὶ οἱ εἴκοσιτέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσον ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἀρνίου ἔχοντες ἕκαστος κιθάρας, καὶ φιάλας χρυσᾶς γεμούσας θυμιαμάτων αἱ εἰσὶν αἱ προσευχαὶ τῶν ἁγίων

9 And they

(Who? The 4 beast & the 24 elders. This is a divided opinion as some say this only refers to the 24 elders. But the grammar reads so that both the 4 beasts and the 24 elders ...)

sung **a new song,**
sing

sung, ᾄδουσιν, 3pl. pres. of the verb ᾄδω, tss. *to sing* (5). See also Re.5.9, *sung*, 14.3, *sung*; 15.3, *sing*. All of these are a 3pl. pres. verb.

new, καινήν, acc. sing. fem. of the adj. καινός, always tss. *new* (bottles, testament, tomb, doctrine, tongues, garment, covenant, commandment, name, song, earth, Jerusalem, etc.

song, ᾠδὴν, acc. sing. of the noun ᾠδή, always tss. *song* (7).

saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us

(the time of the aorist verb stating the fact of redemption)

hast redeemed, ἠγόρασας, 2s. aor. of the verb ἀγοράζω, tss. *to buy* (28), *to redeem* (3).

ἐν ἐκ
to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people,
with from all family language (classes of)

every, πάσης, gen. sing. fem. of the adj. πᾶς, tss. *all, every, every one, whosoever, the whole, all manner of*.

kindred, of the noun φυλή, tss. *tribe* (5.5; 7.4-8, 21.12), *kindred* (1.7; 5.9; 7.9; 11.9; 13.7; 14.6), which refers to all of the families.

tongues, of the noun γλῶσσα, tss. always with the English *tongue*; refers to those grouped or divided by their languages.

Ac.2.8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue (Gr. διάλεκτος, reasoning, discussing, speaking), *wherein we were born?*

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

people, of the noun λαός, tss. always with the English *people*,

and nation;

nation, of the noun ἔθνος, tss. *Gentiles, nation/s, heathen, people*; This word always refers to groups of people by national identity, but as a whole it might refers to the nations (of Gentiles) as opposed to the nation (of Israel).

9 καὶ ἄδουσιν ὠδὴν καινὴν λέγοντες Ἄξιός ἐστι λαβεῖν τὸ βιβλίον καὶ ἀνοῖξαι τὰς σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἐσφάγης καὶ ἠγόρασας τῷ θεῷ ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ αἵματί σου ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς καὶ γλώσσης καὶ λαοῦ καὶ ἔθνους

10 And hast made **us unto our God kings and priests:**
ordained (aorist stating as a matter of fact) (Notice the futurity of it ...)

hast made, ἐποίησας, 2s. aor. of ποιέω, tss. to do, to make, to bring forth, to cause, to ordain, to work, to perform, etc.

and we shall reign on the earth.

we shall reign, βασιλεύσομεν, 1pl. fut. of the verb βασιλεύω, tss. to reign (2), kings ([1]'of them that reign, 1Ti.6.15).

This text says that the four living beasts (creatures) and the four and twenty elders are of the redeemed. Christ's death for them on the cross redeemed them. These stand to represent some, but not all the redeemed. I need to explain what I mean. Given the information now revealed of the four beasts and twenty-four elders it is necessary at this place to try to explain them and what they stand for. They do stand representatively of some.

The four living beasts – In the 4th chapter they are described (vss. 7, 8) as in the midst of the throne and round about the throne, full (laden) with eyes, *before, behind* (v.7), and *within* (v.8), each with their own face. One with the face like a lion, another had the face of a man, another the face like a calf, and another with the face like an eagle flying. And each have six wings. At this place in our text we are told that they are of the redeemed. We must say that they are of those of our brethren. We may safely say that they are certain men among men.

Fe.19.10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See [thou do it] not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Notice these four beasts are full of eyes *before, behind, and within* certainly speaks of *seeing* things future (before), past (behind), and present (within). In the OT such men were first called *seers*. Later they became called *prophets*.

1Sa 9:9 (Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for [he that is] now [called] a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.)

I can't say much more except that it is my opinion that these four beasts (four living creatures) are the four major prophets, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Of this I simply cannot say anymore. Perhaps they represent all of the OT prophets. I can't say for sure.

Above I had cited these references which lead me to understand that the Book of Revelation is an expansion of the prophets, perhaps for the most part these four prophets. (i.e., cf. Is.30.8-26, *note it in a book*; Jer.30.1-9, *Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book*; Dan.12.4, *seal up the book, even to the time of the end ...*)

Of the four and twenty elders – Again, like the four beasts, these refer to some which the Lamb redeemed by the shedding of His blood. In the text of 1Chr.24.4 King David divided the priesthood into twenty-four groups or orders which would come to serve in the Temple in their appointed time (1Chro.24.19). There is no reference to twenty-four in all of the word of God except in 1Chr.24 and Re.4.4; 5.8. Because of what is said of these here in Re.5.8 I am inclined to say that the twenty-four elders refer to the priesthood of the believer. Christ has made both *kings and priests unto God*. Therefore they are as Peter says, a royal priesthood.

1Pe 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 ...

Now that the beasts and elders say that of the Lamb, *'thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and*

people, and nation' tells me that they represent a larger group than just the twenty-eight. There are more than 28 families of the earth, more than 28 tongues, more than 28 kinds of people, and more than 28 different nations. Therefore they stand to represent, not all of the redeemed, but a distinct group from among the redeemed; so, ALL of those that stand in a similar relationship to Christ as they do.

Of the NT kings and priests (saints):

1Pe.2.4 ¶ To whom (Christ) coming, [as unto] a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, [and] precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

...

1Pe 2:9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal (kingly) 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 ...

John wrote clearly that Christ loved the churches and washed them from their sins in His own blood, and made them kings and priests unto God.

Re.1.4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace [be] unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, [who is] the faithful witness, [and] the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The four and twenty elders *at the least* include the faithful, the abiding, the overcomers of the churches of Jesus Christ. But with them we should remember also to apply it to the sons of Abraham.

Of the OT kings and priests (saints):

Ex.19.5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

...

Deu.7.6 For thou [art] an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that [are] upon the face of the earth.

7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye [were] the fewest of all people:

8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Ge.17.4 ¶ As for me, behold, my covenant [is] with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

And if Christ has made an order of kings and priests, then there must be a time and place for them to exercise these roles. Isn't that time the millennial kingdom?

and we shall reign on the earth – There is nothing difficult about this. They say as clearly as can be stated that they shall reign on the earth, this earth, the only earth that is under consideration. Reigning as kings as priests of God begin here. It is not in a spiritual sense, but in a real sense. As real as

this reign will be is as real as all of the judgments that are written in this Book of the Revelation shall be.

Notice the reign expressed by the four beasts and twenty-four elders is future. This sets aside the false notion of a spiritual reign. If it were spiritual one would think that they would have said something to the effect, '*and we are reigning on the earth even now.*' But that is not what they say, it is? What did Paul say about the Christian's present state in the world.

1Co.4.13 ... we are made as the filth of the world, [and are] the offscouring of all things unto this day.

Those aren't terms which tell of ruling and reigning on the earth with a rod of iron. The overcomer has hopes of a seeing the Lord Jesus having an absolute rule over this earth. He has a real hope for reigning with Him.

10 καὶ ἐποίησας ἡμᾶς τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλεῖς καὶ ἱερεῖς καὶ βασιλεύσομεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

εἶδον, v.1

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about
saw sound

round about, κύκλοθεν, adv. tss. round about (3), about (1).

the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them

number, ἀριθμὸς, a noun always tss. with the English number, and means the 'talley,' 'sum', or 'total.'

was μυριάδες μυριάδων **and** χιλιάδες χιλιάδων **thousands of thousands;**

ten thousand, of the Gr. μυριάς, tss. innumerable (Lk.12.1), fifty thousand (lit. 'five ten-thousands), thousands (myriads), innumerable

company (He.12.22), *ten thousands* (Jude 14), *thousand thousand* (Re.9.16).

thousand, the Gr. χιλιάδες, is always tss. with the English *thousand*.

How many angels? Ten thousand times ten thousand equals 100,000,000. And to this add thousands of thousands, meaning add to this number millions more.

11 Καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν ἀγγέλων πολλῶν κύκλοθεν τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν ζώων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς αὐτῶν μυριάδες μυριάδων, καὶ χιλιάδες χιλιάδων

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.*

power, δύναμιν, acc. sing. of the noun δύναμις, tss. *wonderful works, mighty works, ability, miracle, virtue, strength* (Re.1.16; 3.8; 12.10), *power* (Re. 4.11; 5.12; 7.12; 11.17; 13.2; 15.8; 17.13; 19.1), *might, violence, abundance* (Re.18.3).

riches, of the noun πλοῦτος, always tss. with the English *riches*.

wisdom, the noun σοφία, always tss. *wisdom*.

strength, the noun ἰσχὺς, also tss. *might, power, ability*.

honour, the noun τιμή, also tss. *price, sum, precious*.

glory, the noun δόξα, also tss. *dignity, worship, honour, praise*.

blessing, the noun εὐλογία, also tss. *fair speeches, bounty*, and as an adv. *bountifully*.

For now the vast multitude of the elect angels of God praise give Him due glory. But one day the whole mass of God's redeemed, elect shall also harmoniously praise God.

12 λέγοντες φωνῆ μεγάλης ἅξιόν ἐστιν τὸ ἄρνιον τὸ ἐσφαγμένον λαβεῖν τὴν δύναμιν καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ εὐλογίαν

 ἐν ἐν ὑποκάτω
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, I heard (them)

heard, ἤκουσα, 1s. aor. of the verb ἀκούω, to hear.

saying, λέγοντας, acc. pl. masc. part. pres. of λέγω, tss. to say, to call, to tell, to name.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

'Every creature in a still wider antiphonal circle beyond the circle of angels, ... from all the four great fields of life (in heaven, upon the earth, under the earth as in verse 3, with on the sea *epi tēs thalassēs* added.' *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Baker Books, vol. 6, p.337

The chorus of praise to both the Father and the Lamb now goes beyond the four beasts, the twenty-four elders, the angels, and John, to include every creature in heaven and on earth. (vss.11, 12) It gives us the attitude of ALL of God's children when everything is done. One day the entire creation will cry out, 'Worthy is the Lamb!' One day ALL of the children of God will acknowledge that God has the right to do as He is please in heaven and on earth.

Presently, most of Christendom stands opposed to what the LORD has done. They don't want to hear about an eternal purpose. (cf. Eph.3.11) They don't wasn't to hear about an eternal love and election of some to salvation. That don't want to hear about God passing by some. They don't

want to hear of God's sovereignty over everything. They don't want to hear that He knows all things, the end from the beginning.

*Is.46.9 Remember the former things of old: for I [am] God, and [there is] none else; [I am] God, and [there is] none like me,
10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times [the things] that are not [yet] done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure ...*

They don't want to hear that God created the heavens and the earth literally in six days and rested the seventh. They don't want to hear that God has a special, natural, elect people called Israel. They don't want to hear about His specially love among the believing called the church. They don't want to hear that not a jot or tittle of His word shall fail to come to pass. Why? Because they have made a God of their own imagination. They think that he is as we are.

Nu 23:19 God [is] not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do [it]? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

But one day ALL the redeemed shall glorify God as they ought to. Following such a time what more needs to be said?

13 καὶ πᾶν κτίσμα ὃ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐν τῇ γῆ, καὶ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης ἃ ἐστὶν καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς πάντα ἤκουσα λέγοντας Τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῷ ἄρνιῳ ἡ εὐλογία καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων

14 And the four beasts said, Amen.

So be it. (Nothing more needs to be added.)

And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

that liveth, ζῶν, nom. pl. sing. part. pres. of the verb ζάω, to live, to be alive.

In the fourth chapter the very first thing that the apostle John saw in glory was God upon His throne. In this chapter the Lamb of God was accounted of such fitness that He could take the book from the right hand of God and to loose the seals upon it because He has prevailed over sin and death in behalf of all of His people. The chapter closes with John hearing all of creation in heaven, on earth, under the earth and even in the sea giving due glory to both the Father and the Son. The four beasts close it with an Amen, and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship the ever-living One, God.

John is now prepared to receive *the things which shall be hereafter*, things which are future.

14 καὶ τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα ἔλεγον, Ἀμήν, καὶ οἱ εἴκοσιτέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσαν καὶ προσεκύνησαν ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων