

Heaven: The Throne Room of the Universe

GETTING READY EACH DAY TO STAND AT THE AWESOME THRONE OF GOD

Romans 14:10

Awesome has lost a bit of its meaning to us in the 21st Century. In the Bible, God is described as awesome, and when He is present there is such a sense of wonder: that it bordered on fear. This awesomeness was an overpowering sense of God's glory that could be felt.

Our God is An Awesome God

When Paul wrote from Corinth to the fledgling church at Rome, he sought some way that He might encourage them. They lived with all the daily load of life, plus the general excitement that came from being at the center of the world in that generation.

You've heard the modern version of the culture that Rome was in the First Century, summed up in the words: "All roads lead to Rome".

That was true, each Roman Road, built across the Empire, was part of a river of activity that flowed into the pulsating heart of the Empire: the city of Rome.

There was no grander place of building, no larger display of power, no more distracting place of fascination than in Rome. Every day something new arrived, either an army, or a caravan, or some breaking news of far off places and events. There were endless distractions that flowed down the roads that all led to Rome.

Today, via the Internet: all roads now can lead to us. There is hardly anything, going on anywhere: that isn't a click away. The river that flowed into Rome brought good and bad information.

Keep Focused by Battling Distraction

So Paul wanted to help these saints live their lives for Christ. After explaining the glorious doctrines of salvation (Romans 1-11), Paul says: "Since you are saved, live for Christ" which is the short version of Romans 12:1-2.

Then, a few chapters later in Romans 14:10, Paul says, guard what you do with your life, because we all have an appointment. Please look at Romans 14:10 with me.

That pathway of blessing comes only to those that obey Him. Jesus allows us to live as we wish, but reminds us that the clock started running the instant we were saved, and someday, the tape will be replayed. Even in something as small as when a Christian brother disagrees with me, my response matters to God enough that I will answer to Him before the Throne. Romans 14:10 (NKJV):

But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For **we shall all stand** before the judgment seat of Christ.

The destination each of us in Christ are heading is that Throne. We have an appointment that will either make us ashamed or confident, the choice is completely ours.

What remains of our life there someday, that glorified Him: is exactly what we did in our life here that glorified Him. It is that simple. You know what will await you at His Throne because it is what we are doing today.

Either my actions are pleasing or displeasing Him. Period. That is the test. We don't get to redo life when we get to Heaven and see what mattered to God, then it is too late. The blessings of God are tied to my getting focused on what matters to Him now.

How did Paul try to get the distracted Romans to get ready for their big appointment with God? He reminded them of the Throne. That is the same method Jesus uses here in His letter to us, the Book of Revelation.

Why Does God Put the Spotlight on The Throne?

A throne speaks of a king, and his authority and power to rule. Thus, The Throne of God speaks of Him as the Sovereign Majesty on High who Reigns over all, as the Supreme Ruler, King above all kings and Lord above any lords. As the King upon The Throne of the Universe, it is He who controls and upholds all things by the word of His power.

Because God's Throne is mentioned specifically, and clearly by name 39x in Revelation: if we want to understand how God rules, this book is vital. In all the rest of the Bible, the Throne of God is only mentioned by name 18x. So in terms of usage more than 68% of the times God's Word describes the Throne Room of the Universe it is in Revelation. And, almost half of the times the Throne is mentioned are in Revelation 4-5.

Today, I want you to ponder with me what its like to come into the presence of God. We will see through the inspired eyes of the Scripture writers, as they look upon our Awesome and Majestic Lord Almighty.

As we read God's Word we enter into the Throne Room of the Universe and see the Majesty on High, The Almighty, The Ancient of Days in all of His glory.

As we see Him, with reverent hearts, may we bow before Him and worship Him as He is.

Listen to the Holy Scriptures as they focus us upon the awesome splendor that awaits us

when we at last see Him as He is.

Our Awesome Destination in Heaven

I would like to read for you a collection of verses in chronological order from the Scriptures. For me, this is the most amazing description of where we are headed that I've ever found, and it is right out of God's Word:

Out of the north comes golden splendor; God is clothed with awesome majesty.
(Job 37:22, ESV)

There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. *(Exodus 24:10, ESV)*

I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"⁴ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. *(Isaiah 6:1-4, ESV)*

The Ancient of Days took his seat; His clothing was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the court sat in judgment. *(Daniel 7:9-10, ESV)*

His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. *(Matthew 17:2, ESV)*

to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Galatians 1:5, ESV).

To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. *(1 Timothy 1:17, ESV)*

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. *(1 Timothy 6:15-16, ESV)*

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high *(Hebrews 1:3, ESV)*

for our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:29, ESV)

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect. (*Heb. 12:22-23, ESV*)

to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen. (Jude 25 NIV)

One like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (*Revelation 1:13-16, ESV*)

A throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. 3 And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: (*Revelation 4:2-6, ESV*)

It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. (Revelation 21:11-23 NIV)

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (Matthew 6:13 NKJV)

So those Scriptures capture for us:

The Sights of Heaven

When we get to Heaven, we will see this same scene we have already seen through John's eyes in Revelation. His inspired words portray for us a scene of angels—hundreds of millions of angels—"ten thousand times ten thousand"—all clustered about the smooth crystal sea that reflects awesome images from its mirror like surface.

Our senses are besieged by so many different sensations. The colors of the materials surrounding God's Throne are beyond description.

The traditional description of the rainbow is that it is made up of seven colors - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Actually, the rainbow is a whole continuum of colors from red to violet and even beyond the colors that the eye can see.

A cool, emerald-green hue dominates the multi-colored rainbow surrounding God's throne; the city that surrounds us has thick walls of sparkling diamonds. To get the sensation hold up your diamond ring to a light and look through the stone and see dazzling flashes of light.

Multiply that by diamonds large enough to built walls out of and then an entire city that is over 1500 miles high; and looking down beneath your feet you see gold that is transparent so the overpowering radiance of God's glory can refract and glisten through the entire city; everything is made of gems of such beautiful colors that they send forth the light of God's glory.

These are the colors of Heaven, the colors God has chosen to surround Him. His Glory reflected in all these hues: sky-blue stones with translucent, colored stripes; parallel layers of red and white; orange-red to brownish-red to blood-red; a transparent, yellowish gold; light blue aquamarine; yellowish-green; apple-green gold-tinted green; deep blue; shining violet; and intense purple.

The size is astounding. With just an average platform area for each of us to stand on, just the angels would take up 38,000 square miles. Imagine God's Throne is here at Calvary on Drake and all the saints and angels standing in circles around that Throne. Do you know how big just the Throne area would be?

First, the city of New Jerusalem is 1,500 miles wide, long, and high. So, if we are at the center (under the Throne) this area we just read about, would extend to the entire 38,000 square miles of Michigan as the crystal sea. Then, around the Throne would be the city stretching 750 miles to NYC on the East; and 750 miles to Hudson's Bay in Canada on the North; and 750 miles all the way to Tulsa on the West; and 750 miles to down to Atlanta on the South! (2.7×10 to the seventh = square feet per mile; at 900 per person 1.2×10 to the ninth would be just under 40,000 square miles.)

That is an enormous area. AWESOME is the word!

But, no matter what the size may be, just the sight is hard for us to take in, so much beauty, color, and brilliance overwhelms our eyes. One by one our eyes are riveted on the celestial scene before us.

When we finally Stand Before The Throne

Above us and over the heads of the living creatures hangs an awesome sky—sparkling like ice, framing in a jewel-like setting, the emerald throne.

On the throne sits the One who has the appearance of glowing jasper and carnelian, and before Him "a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne"

(5:6).

All fall prostrate before him—the four great angels, the twenty-four elders, and the millions around the sea—and most of all, us! And we sing with them:

Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise! (5:12).

First: We'll See The Throne of God

First we see, central to Heaven, the Throne of God. Completely encircled by the emerald green rainbow that is over, around and beneath the Throne: we are overwhelmed by the massive rumble of power, as endless peals of thunder and flashes of lightning seem to radiate outward from within.

*Revelation 4:5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of **fire were burning before the throne**, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

Listening carefully we hear with John the loud voices like roaring waterfalls rolling past the seven blazing pillars of flame that burn in a circle around God's Throne. An exiled Jewish prophet named Daniel writes these words in chapter 7:9-10:

*"I watched till thrones were put in place, **and the Ancient of Days was seated**; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. **His throne was a fiery flame**, Its wheels a burning fire; **A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him**. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. . ."*

Second: We'll See The Sea of Glass

Next, the FLOOR if it can be called that, is an ocean of completely clear and reflective glass.

In this crystal sea we can see all the colors, lights and objects are reflected and amplified.

Revelation 4:6a **Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal.**

Third: We'll See The Living-Burning Ones

Then the BURNING ONES, that is what seraphim means, and the LIVING ONES, that is what Cherubim means: capture our focus.

*Isaiah 6:1-3 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw **the Lord sitting on a throne**, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 **Above it** stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And **one cried to another** and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory*

As our eyes turn to follow the four glistening living beings each with four distinct faces: lion, calf, man, eagle, and completely covered with eyes.

*Revelation 4:6b-11 And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were **four living creatures** full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the **second living creature** like a calf, the **third living creature** had a face like a man, and the **fourth living creature** was like a flying eagle. 8 The **four living creatures**, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"*

They move like flashes of light with fire passing between them, gliding through the expanse around the Ancient of Days in theo-centric orbit always facing the Almighty One.

Fourth: We'll See The 24 Elders

Now as we watch, 24 ELDERS rise and fall, under the awesome expanse of space over the Throne that sparkles like pure on the crystal blue pavement as it is called in Exodus. Then we see a circle just beyond the burning pillars of fire, and the four living creatures that surrounds God's Throne--made up of 24 small thrones seated with white robed celestial men.

*Revelation 4:9-11 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the **twenty-four elders** fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and **cast their crowns before the throne**, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

Each man holds a harp, wears a crown, and holds a golden bowl. These golden bowls contain the worship offered by God's saints on Earth.

And repeatedly we see those twenty-four elders fall on their faces pouring out to

the Lord, the collected worship of the saints as the hosts of Heaven loudly chant the Glory of God.

With the mighty sound of seraphim and cherubim wings, we hear the voices, thunders, and sounds of the entire Universe blending into one crystal clear affirmation:

*Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.
(Revelation 4:8)*

Fifth: We'll See The Countless Angels

Then, ANGELS capture our attention. These countless white robed angels standing like living walls of pure white robes rising in circular rings reflecting the light of God. They rise and fall to the sounds of the four creatures crisscrossing the expanse on the four corners of the Throne. They move as one: falling down on their faces as they speak the wonders of God's Glory.

*Revelation 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard **the voice of many angels around the throne**, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.*

Finally, at a special moment every angel and every elder and every saint falls prostrate before him—those four great angels, those twenty-four elders, the hundreds of millions around the sea—and most of all, us! And we all join together to say with them:

*Revelation 5:12 Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise! (5:12)*

Awesome.

In the Bible, God is described as awesome, and when He is present there is such a sense of wonder: that it bordered on fear.

This awesomeness was an overpowering sense of God's glory that could be felt.

Are we Getting Ready Each Day, to stand at the awesome Throne of God?