**Reboot 2021**

**Reboot our Hope**

**Revelation 4:1-6**

We are starting 2021 with a four week series, Reboot 2021. Last week one of our elders, Matt Early, looked at the Lord’s Prayer in Rebooting Your Prayer Life. This week I want to look at God’s throne in Revelation 4:1-6, the title of my message is Reboot our Hope. If you have your bibles turn to Revelation 4:1-6.

What happened Wednesday is unprecedented in the United States. From a Christian perspective or biblical worldview, the use of worldly power and physical violence is never the answer. I am not saying that Christians incited violence nor am I advocating fatalism or ignoring involvement in politics. But God has called me to lift our eyes to see God’s infinite worth, to a new or renewed vision of God our King and leave with renewed hope. So, let’s read Revelation 4:1-6 and look at God’s throne.

**The Invitation from Heaven (vs. 1)**

The exalted Jesus calls John to come up to show him what *must* take place. Jesus wants John to see history from the perspective of heaven. That verb, must, means divine necessity and divine determination. In other words, God has *ordained*[[1]](#footnote-1) the events of history to ensure that they take place yet he does it in a way that humanity is still morally responsible and God is innocent of evil. This leads us to God on his throne.

**God on His Throne (vs. 2-3)**

The description of the throne room is utterly fantastic. John explains the throne room with analogies, heavenly realities in earthly metaphors. First, he describes absolute sovereignty.

* **Sovereignty**

The most obvious feature of heaven is a throne. It is the center of everything and all of heaven is fixed on Him who sits on the throne.The throne guarantees his sovereignty over all things; nothing is outside his rule. The Psalmists tells us that God's throne is in heaven so he rules over the nations (47:8; 103:19). The throne guarantees that the victory is secure, the control room of heaven ensures that history is unfolding as planned. Then John describes indescribable glory.

* **Glory**

Now John tells us about Him who sits on the throne. But there is no description of God, words are too weak to describe his indescribable glory. The one on the throne had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. Modern stone classifications are different than ancient ones. Jasper is clear like crystal, like a diamond that reflects the light. Carnelian is reddish in color and it is said that when light hit carnelian it glowed like it was on fire. The psalmist tells us that God wraps himself in light, “you are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment (104:1-2).” He dwells in 'unapproachable light (1 Tim 6:16).' So, using stones are John’s attempt to describe the light of his presence, his glory. Around the throne is an emerald rainbow which reminds us of the rainbow that appeared after the flood when God saved Noah and his family inside the ark but judged the rest of humanity for their wickedness. Revelation describes a coming judgement on all who are indifferent to this throne. The only safety from this judgement is found inside the ark of Jesus Christ. Then John sees around the throne twenty four thrones.

**The Twenty Four Thrones Displays God's Majesty (vs. 4)**

Kings never make public appearances alone but always have an entourage. And the more important they are, the more attendants they have with them. Before you get to God’s throne you pass through twenty-four lesser thrones separating God’s throne from the rest of heaven. On these thrones are elders dressed in white with golden crowns on their heads. They are probably angelic creatures with their own dignity and royalty and authority. You don’t just stroll up to this throne. And you certainly would never consider storming it. Then John describes convulsions coming from the throne.

**The Heavenly Convulsions Displays God's Judgment (vs. 5)**

From this throne came heavenly convulsions - flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder (5). Storms and other natural disasters have incredible power – trees break like toothpicks, buildings crumble like sand, thunder and lightning makes children run for the covers. These convulsions show us the source of coming judgment. Then before the throne are seven torches of fire which are the seven spirits of God. Seven is the number of perfection or completeness. He is not saying the Spirit is made up of seven spirits but that the perfectively powerful Holy Spirit, the agent through whom God’s plans and purposes are accomplished in this world. Not worldly power, not political power but God’s divine power. Finally, John describes what looks like a vast glassy sea.

**The Sea Displays God's Unapproachableness (vs. 6)**

Before the throne there is *as it were* a sea of glass, like crystal. God’s kingly majesty is displayed as he makes known his absolute transcendence. John sees a vast blue expanse, like glass and clear like crystal. Large expanses are typical of kings, they separate you from the throne, a floor that is polished so as to radiate its gleaming brightness. The king’s majesty and transcendence is displayed by this expanse. The gap between us and God is so great that no human can get to him. This vast sea reminds us that no one can approach the Eternal King. If it is to happen it is because God himself comes to us to overcome the barrier. Revelation chapter 5 describes how this barrier is overcome, the slain lamb is a king, Jesus Christ (5:4-14). When you see magnitude of God's majesty and transcendence you see your need for Jesus, the lamb of God, sacrificed for your sins.

This vision of the heavenly throne room reminds us that God, who is sovereign and glorious, rules over history to fulfill his eternal plan through the gospel of the kingdom. The vision reminds us that our hope is the throne of heaven. The vision reminds that King Jesus is a mighty Savior who saves us from our sin. Where is your hope today; what do you need to be saved from today?

Life Group Questions:

1. What comes to your mind when you think of a king or throne?
2. What strikes you about this passage?
3. Why is the throne in the center of heaven?
4. How does this vision affect how we view and live life?
5. Everyone believes God is sovereign but what does that mean?
6. How does this vision impact how you see God?
7. What do the convulsions of heaven mean?
8. What does the coming judgement impact how we live? Share the gospel?
9. How are Christians to relate to politics if Christ is our hope and his eternal plan is secure?

1. God ordained means that God causes or allows something to happen. God can ordain something to happen without directly causing it. So, he can ordain sin yet not be accountable for it, for instance the death of his son Jesus (see Mark 14:21; Acts 2:23;4:27-28). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)