

## Commentary on Revelation chapters 3 and 4 by Chuck Smith 5.4.25

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### May memory verse

#### Commandment 1 Exodus 20:1&2

<sup>2</sup> I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

<sup>3</sup> Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

#### Commandment 2 Exodus 20:4

<sup>4</sup> Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing that is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:

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**Chapter 3** And unto the angel of the church in Sardis (Protestant Reformation) write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God ([Rev 3:1](#)),

And so the fullness of the Spirit as it dwelt in Jesus, Isaiah the eleventh chapter.

and the seven stars; I know thy works, that you have a name that you are alive, but really you are dead ([Rev 3:1](#)).

Dead Protestantism. And I'll tell you if you don't believe it is dead, go to Europe. You go into a post-Christian era when you get to Europe. It is dark. The church is dead. The Protestant Reformation in Europe is dead. You say you are alive, but really you are dead.

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found your works (complete) before God ([Rev 3:2](#)).

The problem with the Protestant Reformation is that it wasn't complete. In the Protestant Reformation they drew with it many of the pagan practices that originated in Babylonian religion systems. They came out, but not far enough. Their works weren't complete. So, we find within the church today a lot of relics from the Babylonian system, the Babylonian religion. We just went through one, the celebration of Christmas on December 25th. It is a tremendous pagan celebration originating in Babylon adopted by Rome called Saturnalia. It was a time of drunkenness and feasting and the giving of gifts and celebration as the sun past through the winter solstice. It was adapted by the church. It was picked up by the Protestants. We are soon going to be entering into the Lent season which was borrowed from the Babylonian system. So, it wasn't a complete reformation.

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Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, hold fast, repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and you'll not know what hour I'm coming upon thee (Rev 3:3).

So now He is warning concerning His coming for the church. Paul said, "You are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. You are children of the light, therefore walk as children of the light." Now there are many today who are not watching for the return of Jesus Christ. There are many who in the church mock the idea of the Lord returning and interrupting history.

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy (Rev 3:4).

So within the Protestant Reformation, those great persons didn't defile their garments, walking with Him in purity, they are worthy.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before my Father, and before his holy angels (Rev 3:5).

"He that denies me before men," Jesus said, "I will deny before my Father, but if you confess Me before men, I will confess you before my Father which is in heaven." I am looking forward to the Lord confessing my name before His Father. That is my only hope. If that doesn't happen, I have had it. I will confess his name before the Father.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Rev 3:6).

Now we have the church of Philadelphia, the faithful remnant. Those who are holding to the Word of God. Those who gather on Sunday evening to study the Word of God.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens (Rev 3:7);

Now he is borrowing a description not out of chapter one in this. The rest of the description is out of chapter one. He is going back to Isaiah 22 for this description. And in the twenty-second chapter of Isaiah in verse twenty-two, well, go back to twenty-one, we read this prophecy concerning the Messiah, "I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open, and none shall shut: and he shall shut and none shall open." So, Jesus is here laying claim to that prophecy of the Messiah in Isaiah 22:22. I have the key of David. I open and no man can shut. I shut and no man can open.

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I know thy works: behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it (Rev 3:8):

That to me is exciting. The Lord sets before us an open door of opportunity and no man can shut it. I believe that that open door will be open to us until the Lord comes. No man can shut it.

for thou hast a little strength (Rev 3:8), We are not very strong. You know it is true that God is doing a wonderful work here and it is exciting to see what God is doing, but we have hardly touched the county. There are so many out there who need Jesus Christ. We can't really sit back and say, "Look, how many we have got coming here." There are so many more to be reached. We have a little strength. Thank God we have a little strength. Thank God that He has set before us the open door.

Behold, I will make of them the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee (Rev 3:9).

There will be that day that will come that the Jews will recognize that Jesus is the Messiah. That is a work that God is going to do in bringing the knowledge to these people. I do not feel called of God as an evangelist to the Jewish people or to the Jewish nation. I believe that is something that God is going to do. He may call others. And that isn't to say that God doesn't call people as He did to the Jews, but He has not called me. And I don't feel that I have this great obligation to share the Gospel to the Jews. I believe that God has blinded their eyes until the fullness of the gentiles has come in. And so the day will come when they will acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah and I pray and long for that day. I hope for that day. But in the meantime I share the truth of God with those that accept, with those that believe.

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, [and here it is, because you've kept His Word], I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth (Rev 3:10).

So, the promise of being kept from the Great Tribulation, because we have kept the word of His patience.

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which you have, that no man take your crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name (Rev 3:11-12).

Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord is our righteousness. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the church (Rev 3:13).

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No call to repentance, just a commendation for keeping the Word, the promise that He would also keep them.

Now the final apostate condition of the church, the church of Laodicea represented by those ministers that are pro-abortion and pro-pornography and pro every other evil that comes down the pike, who dress in clerical robes and claim to be ministers of Jesus Christ but are really of the synagogue of Satan.

to the angel of the church of Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness ([Rev 3:14](#)), In chapter one, He was known as the faithful and the true witness.

the beginning of the creation of God ([Rev 3:14](#)); Or who was in the beginning of God's creation. In the beginning was the Word, that the word was with God, all things were made by Him.

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth ([Rev 3:15-16](#)).

The nauseating state of the church.

Because you say, I am rich, [endowed with great foundations and funds, we're rich.] we're increased with goods, we have need of nothing; you know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked ([Rev 3:17](#)):

Interesting how the church observes itself and how Jesus observes the church.

I counsel thee buy from me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness does not appear; anoint your eyes with eyesalve, that you may see ([Rev 3:18](#)).

That is of the Holy Spirit. As many as I love ([Rev 3:19](#)), And here He is loving the church in this sad condition.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent ([Rev 3:19](#)).

Oh, how patient the Lord is. He still loves the church in this apostate condition. "As many as I love, I rebuke." If the Lord has rebuked you, then be thankful He loves you. If the Lord chastens you, be thankful you are His child and He loves you.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ([Rev 3:20](#)): Actually the church has put Christ on the outside. You read the Gallup Polls and all and it is rather frightening to find out how many ministers do not really believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, do not believe in the virgin birth, do not believe that there is an actual heaven or hell. The percentages are around fifty to sixty percent that don't believe in these things. It is sad. You wonder why

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they are ministers. You might as well establish another religion on Mother Goose rhymes or something, or Aesops Fables. Why espouse a book that you can't trust or is not true?

I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in, and will sup with him (Rev 3:20),

Eating supper is a very significant act from a Biblical standpoint, from a cultural standpoint at the time of Christ. It signified becoming one with the other person. And Jesus is always wanting to eat supper with people. What does it mean? It means that He wants to become one with you. Just open the door and He will come in and become one with you. He will eat supper with you.

To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches (Rev 3:21-22).

**Chapter 4** Revelation chapter four begins with the Greek word "meta autos". And the first verse begins and ends with the same Greek words. The words literally from the Greek are "after these things". So as we come to this phrase, "after these things," our minds should flash back to chapter 1:19, where the book of Revelation was divided into three basic divisions. "Write the things which you have seen, the things which are, and the things which will be after these things", "meta autos". So obviously we are coming into the third section of the book of Revelation, after these things. After what things?

Well, it seems to me that it would be quite apparent and obvious. It would be after the things that he was just talking about. And the things that he was just talking about were the things of the church; so, after the things of the church. For we had in chapters two and three, the messages of Jesus to the seven churches of Asia, which as we pointed out represent seven periods of church history.

So, after these things, the things of the church,

I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show you things which must be after these things (Rev 4:1).

I believe that when the church has completed its purpose upon the earth and has finished its witness, or as Paul describes, "when the fullness of the gentiles is come in," that the Lord is then going to catch away His church into heaven.

Paul said, "behold, I show you a mystery. We are not going to all sleep, but we are all going to be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. The trump of God shall sound, the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible." First Thessalonians 4:16-17, Paul said, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we

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which are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

So, I believe that the church is to be raptured. And I believe that the point of the rapture in the book of Revelation is in here in chapter 4:1. I believe that John was taken by the Spirit unto the day of the Lord and experienced through the Spirit the rapture of the church. When the Lord had completed His messages to the churches, then the call to John was "come up hither and I will show you things, which must be after these things, after the things of the church".

So as we enter then into the fourth chapter, we enter into the post-church era upon the earth. We will be coming back to the earth in chapter six, but it is the post-church era, when God now judges the world for its ungodliness and unrighteousness and for its rejection of His Son. But the church, with John here in chapter four caught up into heaven,

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat upon the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald (Rev 4:2-3).

So the basic color that emanates from the throne is a green, along with the sardine red, along with the jasper which is a clear crystalline-type of a stone with a purple hue.

Now, Paul told us in Timothy that God dwells in a light that is unapproachable by man. And here in heaven, even in our glorified bodies, we only see the radiance of the glory of God as it emanates from His throne like a brilliant light, the predominant color being green, the rainbow about the throne like an emerald, green in color, with the sardine red color and the jasper stone in brilliance in coloring and light.

And round about the throne there were twenty-four lesser thrones: [thronus in Greek translated seats] and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold (Rev 4:4).

The twenty-four elders clothed in white raiment are representative of the church according to most Bible scholars. These twenty-four elders are representative. The fact that they are in white robes is the church is to be clothed in white robes, the righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ.

Jesus said to the church of Laodicea, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev 3:21). The twenty-four lesser thrones. Now we see the heavenly scene sitting in white robes upon their thrones.

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And out of the throne [that is the throne of God] there proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God (Rev 4:5).

Now again it is important that we place in our mind the tabernacle that Moses built in the wilderness, because we are told in the book of Hebrews that the tabernacle was actually a model of heavenly things. If you want to know basically what heaven is going to look like, you can go back to the tabernacle and you can get an idea of what the throne of God is like in heaven.

And there in the tabernacle we remember when the priest came into the holy place on the left-hand side, there was the seven candlesticks coming out of the one base. And these seven golden candlesticks, we now know from the book of Revelation, are representative of the Holy Spirit and the presence of the Holy Spirit there before the throne of God, the seven-fold work or the complete work of the Holy Spirit. We remember that in the Holy of Holies there was that Ark of the Covenant that Moses made covered with the gold lid, which was the mercy seat, upon which there was carved these golden cherubim with their wings touching the corners of the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle.

And so as we go on in the reading of the description here of heaven, we next come to these cherubim. These angelic beings created by God who seem to be the highest order of angelic beings.

And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. And the first living creature was like a lion, and the second was like a calf, and the third had a face as a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle (Rev 4:6-7).

These cherubim were first mentioned in the book of Genesis. When God drove Adam out of the garden after his sin, He put the cherubim at the gate of the garden lest man should return to the garden and eat of the tree of life and live forever in a sinful state. The cherubim are again mentioned in the book of Ezekiel, as in chapter one and in chapter ten. Ezekiel had a vision of the throne of God, which parallels the vision of John here in the book of Revelation. As Ezekiel saw the cherubim, each had the four faces, so on each side a face, and the faces of the ox, and the lion, and the man and the eagle in the vision that Ezekiel had. And for background you should probably read Ezekiel one and ten to find parallel passages to John's vision here of the throne of God in heaven. And it is Ezekiel that names these creatures as the cherubim.

Now from the book of Ezekiel, also we know in the twenty-eighth chapter that that was the position that was once occupied by Satan. That the Lord speaks of him declaring that he was one of the anointed cherubs. So he had a place that was very close to God, for the cherubim are about the throne of God in their worship of God. And Ezekiel tells us that at one time Satan was one of these anointed cherub.

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Again in a parallel passage Isaiah six, Isaiah also saw the throne of God. And when he got the vision of the throne of God, he said, "Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips. I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips" ([Isaiah 6:5](#)). And he saw a seraphim, which is probably in the order of the cherubim. Cherubim is only the plural of cherub. So you have heard of cherubs, so the plural of cherub is cherubim, as the plural of seraph is the seraphim. The "im" is a plural in the Hebrew.

So he saw the seraphim, who came to the altar of God with a live coal and touched his lips and said, "Now, are you clean." But we find here in John's vision of them that,

each of them had six wings; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come ([Rev 4:8](#)).

And so they are there around the throne of God declaring the holiness of the eternal God.

And when these living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, [the eternal God] 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, 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 ([Rev 4:9-11](#)).

And so here we see the first scene in heaven. And this will probably be one of the first scenes that you will observe in heaven as John did; the throne of God and the cherubim about the throne of God, and the worship of God as He sits upon the throne.

And then the response to the declaration of the holiness of God made by the cherubim are the twenty-four elders responding saying, "Thou art worthy to receive glory and honor and power." Why? First of all, because You have created all things, not that You have allowed all things to evolve. You created all things. And not only that, but it is for Your pleasure they are and were created. Here is a statement of fact that is important for us to accept. I was created for God's pleasure. That means I was not created for my own pleasure.

Thus, I should not seek to please myself, because then I am not answering the purpose of my existence. I should seek to please God; then I am answering the purpose of my existence. But the interesting thing is when I live to please God I find great pleasure myself. Therein is happiness. Therein is satisfaction. Therein is fulfillment when I live to please God. "If any man seeks to save his life, he is going to lose it, but if he loses his life for My sake," Jesus said, "you will find it" ([Matthew 10:39](#)). And to really find what living is all about, you have got to just live for His pleasure. Thus, you are answering the purpose of your existence and thus your life is fulfilling and rich.