

CROWNS CAST BEFORE GOD'S THRONE

PART II

WHO WILL CAST THESE CROWNS?
Why Will These Crowns Be Cast?
When Will These Crowns Be Cast?

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter [‘after these things’].

And immediately I was [‘I became’] in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne...

And round about the throne were four and twenty seats [‘thrones’]: and upon the seats [‘thrones’] I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold...

The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:1, 2, 4, 10, 11).

These crowns cast before God’s throne, as previously seen (Part I), can only have to do with *the government of the earth*. And, at this point in the book, they can be worn by *angels alone*. *The Son* will not yet have taken the kingdom, though the Father will have previously delivered it into His hands (*cf.* Dan. 7:13, 14; Luke 19:15; Rev. 11:15; 19:11ff).

(The Greek word translated “elders” in Revelation chapter four is *presbuteroi* [meaning, ‘elders,’ ‘older ones’ (same word is used referring to elders in Israel’s government, the Church, etc.)]. The word would have to do with *older ones in relation to that in view*, which here is *the government of the earth*. Thus, *only angels* could possibly be in view at this point in the book.)

These crowns are relinquished to God — with a view to man ruling in the kingdom — so that God can appoint those who had previously been shown qualified at events surrounding the judgment seat [chs. 1-3] to positions of power and authority; and those whom God appoints will wear these crowns in Christ’s kingdom.

These crowns are cast before God’s throne (*cf.* 4:1-4; 5:1-7) because *the Father alone* is the One Who places and/or removes rulers in His kingdom (Dan. 4:17-37; 5:18-21). *He alone* is the One Who placed those represented by the twenty-four elders in the positions which they occupied; and *He alone* is the One Who will place individuals in particular positions in the kingdom of Christ (Matt. 20:20-23).

The transfer of the government of the earth, from the hands of angels to the hands of man, in reality, is what the first nineteen chapters of the

Book of Revelation are about; and, as well, this is what the whole of Scripture preceding these nineteen chapters is also about. In this respect, these twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God’s throne forms a key event which one must grasp if he would properly understand the Book of Revelation and Scripture as a whole.

Christ and His bride, in that coming day, will rule the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels. And, in the process of ruling in this manner, they will wear *all the crowns* worn by Satan and his angels prior to his fall.

Action of the Elders

Thus, that which is depicted through the action of the twenty-four elders in Rev. 4:10, 11 is contextually self-explanatory. This has to do with the government of the earth, it occurs at a time following events surrounding the judgment seat but preceding Christ taking the seven-sealed scroll from His Father’s right hand and subsequently breaking the seals, and it occurs at a time when Satan’s reign is about to be brought to a close.

After events in Revelation chapters one through three have come to pass, *for the first time in man’s history*, the person (the bride) who is to rule with the One to replace Satan (Christ) will have been made known and shown forth. And events in the fourth chapter reflect this fact.

Only one thing could possibly be in view at this point in the book, for the bride will not only have been made known but will be ready for events pertaining to the transfer of power to begin. The twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God’s throne can only depict the angels who did not go along with Satan in his

rebellion relinquishing their crowns, with a view to those comprising the bride wearing these crowns during the Messianic Era.

But the crowns worn by Satan and those angels presently ruling with him are another matter. These crowns will have to be taken from Satan and his angels by force when Christ returns to overthrow Gentile world power at the end of the Tribulation (a power exercised during Man's Day under Satan and his angels [Dan. 10:13-20]).

(The fact that angels represented by the twenty-four elders are not presently ruling with Satan can be shown not only by their present position — in God's presence, in heaven — but by the Greek word which is used for the type crown which they are seen wearing.

There are two words in the Greek text for "crown" — *stephanos*, and *diadema*. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, with *regality* in view, one major distinction stands out concerning how these two words are used. *Diadema* refers to the type crown worn by a monarch, one presently exercising regal power. *Stephanos*, on the other hand, is used in an opposite sense. It is used to show someone crowned but not presently exercising regal power.

For example, the crown seen on Christ's head in Rev. 14:14, preceding His reign, is referred to by the word *stephanos* in the Greek text. A crown on Christ's head at this time could only anticipate His impending reign — the same as the crown on the woman's head in Rev. 12:1 (also referred to by the word *stephanos*), with the woman representing Israel, God's firstborn son, about to exercise the rights of primogeniture, as

Christ, God's firstborn Son, is about to exercise these same rights as well.

Then, when Christ returns to the earth to take the kingdom, He will have many crowns upon His head; and the Greek text uses *diadema* rather than *stephanos* to refer to these crowns, for Christ will be returning as "King of kings, and Lord of lords" [Rev. 19:12, 16].

The twenty-four elders in chapter four cast crowns referred to as *stephanos* before the throne, indicating that, though crowned, these elders were not exercising regal positions. And the many crowns which Christ will have on His head at the time of His return are undoubtedly these same crowns (Rev. 19:12). But, anticipating that day when Christ reigns, the Book of Revelation uses the word *diadema* to refer to these crowns, for Christ will be exercising *a regal position*, with Satan about to be overthrown.

The crowns on Christ's head at this time though will not be worn by Christ when He rules the earth, for He is to wear the crown presently worn by Satan [the incumbent ruler] in that day. Rather, these crowns will be given to those forming the bride [whom the Father will previously have appointed to various positions of power and authority with His Son]; and this will occur following that time when the remainder of the crowns having to do with the earth's government are forcibly taken from Satan and his angels.)

Twenty-Four, Thirty-Six

The identity of *the twenty-four elders* is shown not only by their actions and the place where this occurs in the book but also by their *num-*

ber. Comparing Revelation chapters four and twelve (4:4, 10, 11; 12:3, 4), it appears evident that the government of the earth — originally established by God prior to Satan's fall — was representatively shown by *three sets of twelve, thirty-six crowned rulers*. "Three" is the number of *Divine perfection*, and "twelve" is the number of *governmental perfection*.

Those angels who did not follow Satan in his attempt to exalt his throne would be represented by the twenty-four elders — *two sets of twelve, showing two-thirds of the original contingent of angels ruling with Satan*. And the angels who did go along with Satan, presently ruling with him, would be represented by *a third set of twelve, showing the other one-third of the original contingent of angels ruling with Satan* (Rev. 12:3, 4).

In this respect, these three representative sets of twelve would show *Divine perfection in the earth's government*. And also in this respect, this same perfection in the structure of the earth's government has not existed *since Satan's attempt to exalt his throne*.

But, this structured perfection will one day again exist in the earth's government. When Christ and His bride ascend the throne together, crowns worn by those represented by all three sets of twelve will be brought together again. Then, *Divine perfection* will once again exist in the government of the one province in God's universe where imperfection has existed for millenniums.

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