

Elementary Children's Church

Lesson 31

Continuation of Bridal Manifestation in the New Testament (Ranks in the Resurrection)

1. The Bible clearly tells us that there will be ranks in the resurrection. Just as last week we read that as one star differs from another in glory, we continue in **I Corinthians 15:22-23**, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." In the book of Revelation, the Lord shows the Apostle John different companies of believers in heaven, arriving at different times, and doing very different things.

2. In **Revelation 4:4**, we see the first company to arrive in heaven: a high ranking company, the 24 elders, which are the Old Testament full overcomers. You can read about some of them in the "faith hall of fame" in the 11th chapter of Hebrews: Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Joseph, etc. They are very close to the throne, and worship with great praise around the throne of God. But the next group is the most spectacular. The next company is the 4 living ones in **Revelation 4:6**. These 4 represent redeemed Saints (**Revelation 4:9**), who are the full overcomers in Christ. These are joint-heir saints (just like a husband and wife). Notice that they are in the midst of the throne, right in it, ruling and reigning jointly with Jesus Christ. They later even pour out the wrath of God with Christ in the tribulation time; jointly reigning is just what God said it would be (wow!). Next in **Revelation 7:9**, we get a glimpse of the largest group in heaven and one of the latest to arrive, the innumerable multitude. There are so many in this group that you can't even count them. They come out from the tribulation. God has to wipe away the tears from their eyes (**Revelation 7:17**); they missed God's best and had to endure more hardship and suffering because they were "asleep" at the first trump (**I Thessalonians 5**). Notice instead of being seated in the throne as the Bride (the 4 living ones), they are standing before the throne waving palms. Pictured more as servants, completely satisfied servants, but only heirs of God, as we read in **Romans 8**; sadly they missed out on the opportunity to be joint heirs and glorified together with Jesus Christ as His wife.