

Saint John the Evangelist

P A R A D I S E

Saint John the Evangelist, in the Apocalypse, narrates a vision of Paradise: "I, John, your brother and companion in trials, found myself on the island of Patmos. I was enraptured in ecstasy on the day of Sunday and I heard behind me a loud voice, like a trumpet, that said to me: Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven Churches in Asia... I turned around to see who spoke to me and saw seven golden candleholders and in the middle there was someone like the Son of Man, wearing a robe reaching to the ankles and His chest was girded with a gold sash. He had His head and hair white as snow; His eyes were like flaming fire; His feet were like scorched copper; His voice was like the sound of rushing water; His face was like the Sun, when it shines in all its might... I fell at His feet as if dead, and He placed His right hand on me, saying: Do not fear! I am the first and the last; I am the Living One Who once was dead; now I live forever and ever and I have the keys of death and hell... Then I looked and behold a door opened in Heaven and the voice I heard earlier spoke to me again: Come up here and I will show you the things that will happen. – And immediately I was taken

up in spirit, and behold a throne rose up in Heaven. The one Who sat there was reminiscent of jasper and carnelian and around the throne there was a halo resembling emerald... Twenty-four elders prostrated themselves in front of the Seated One before the throne, saying: Worthy are You, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things and because of Your will they exist!...

I watched and heard around the throne the voices of many Angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, who were saying: The Lamb that was sacrificed is worthy to receive power, divinity, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing!...

And I heard all the creatures in Heaven say: To the One seated on the throne and to the Lamb be honor, glory and power forever and ever!...

After this I looked and saw the Lamb and with Him one hundred forty-four thousand people, who had His name and the one of His Father written on their forehead. I heard a sound, that was like a concert of harpists that played their instruments, and a new canticle was sung before the throne, a canticle that no one could learn, except the one hundred forty-four thousand ransomed from the



earth, those who indeed remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes... Then I saw an immense crowd, which no one could count, from every nation and tribe and people and language. They stood in front of the throne and before the Lamb, in white robes, with palms in their hands and they said: Hail to our God, who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb! – An Angel told me: Write: Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb!"

