



# **Theophany in Revelation**

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# Theophany: Outline

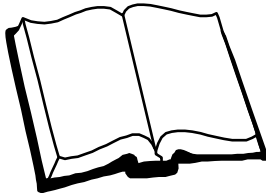
- **A. God's control**
- **B. God's glory**
- **C. The Lamb and the scroll**

# **A.** Theophany in General

# Theophany as All-Encompassing

Theophany

Covenant

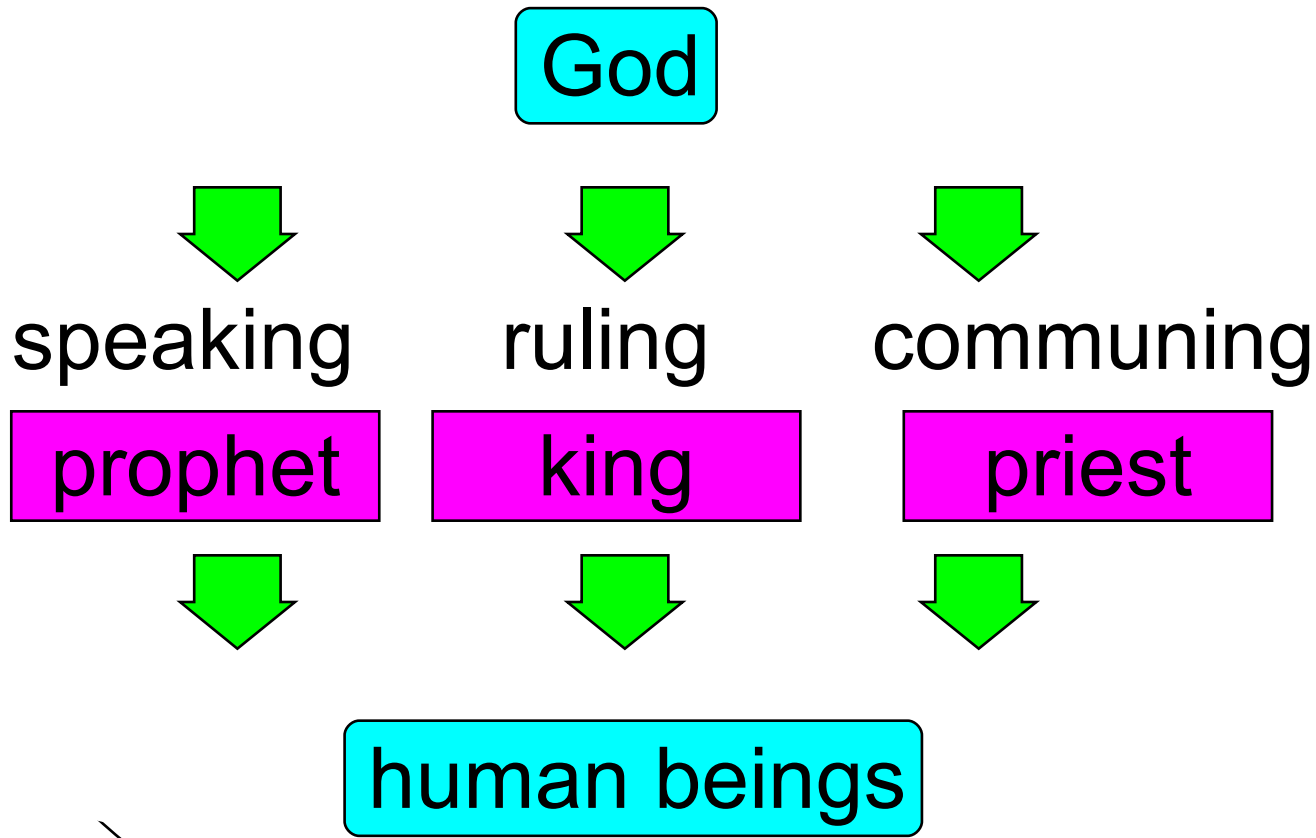


- See Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence*

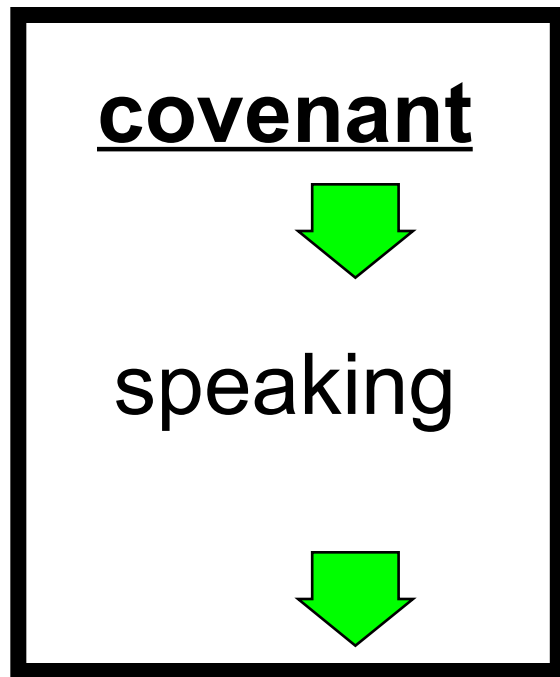
# Definition of Theophany

- More than one definition is possible.
- I want a broad definition.
- “An encounter with divine presence accompanied by extraordinary manifestation or display mediating that presence.”
- Include veiled or elusive manifestations.

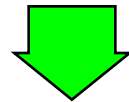
# Theophany and Other Themes



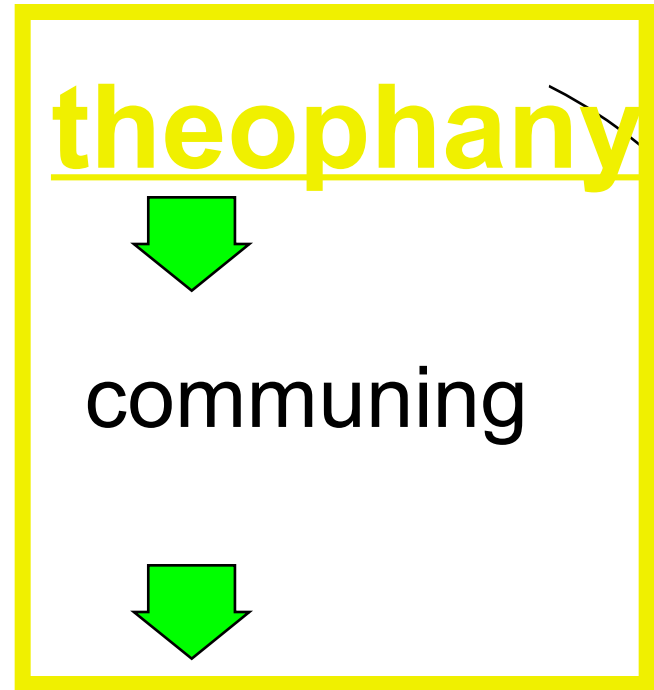
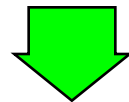
# Theophany and Covenant



God



ruling

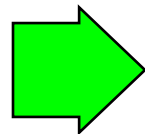


human beings

# Theophany in Spiritual Growth

- Know God as revealed in Rev.
- 2 Cor. 3:18 applies theophanic language to the heart of Christian experience.
- Growth in Christ is unbounded, Eph. 3:18-19.

theophany  
in Christ



transformation of  
believers in Christ

Inexhaustible.



# Theophany in Revelation

**Christophany in 1:12-20**

**Theophany in 4:1-5:14**

**Empowers judgments 6:1-22:5**

**1:12-22:5 as a whole**

**B. Rev. 1:12-20**

# **The Lampstands (1:12-13)**

- **Primary connections: 1:20 (2:1).**
- **Significance: Christ is in the midst of the churches.**
- **Secondary connections:**
  - ◆ **tabernacle, temple**
  - ◆ **lights of heaven (stars in 1:20)**
  - ◆ **disciples as light, Matt 5:14**

# **Vision of Christ (1:12-16)**

- **Primary connections: 14:14; Dan. 7:13; 7:9-10; 10:5-6; Ezek. 1.**
- **Significance: Christ is divine judge and ruler, both for blessing and for curse.**
- **Secondary and tertiary connections: OT theophanies.**

# Judging as a Theme

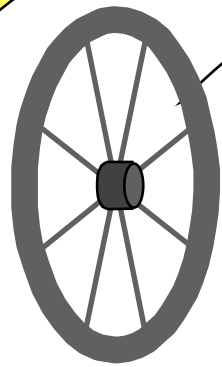
- Judgment in Ezek. 1 and Dan. 7:9-10.
- From Rev. 1-3:
  - ◆ 1:18, keys of death
  - ◆ 1:20, stars in the hand, with authority
  - ◆ Rev. 2-3, warnings and commendations
  - ◆ 2:8, 10, authority over death
  - ◆ 2:18, eyes searching the heart
- 14:14; 10:1; 19:12,15; 15:6 have judgment.

## **C.** Types of OT Theophanies

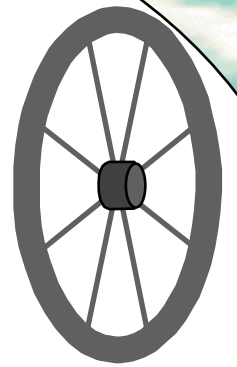
# Thunderstorm Theophanies



- Mt. Sinai as primary.
- Instances: Exod. 19; Ps. 18:7-15; Zech 9:14-15; Ps. 68:7-8(8-9); 144:5-6; 29:3-11; 50:3; 97:2-5; Isa. 64:1-3; Zeph. 1:15-16.
- Features: cloud, smoke, thunder, lightning, fire, maybe earthquake and wind.

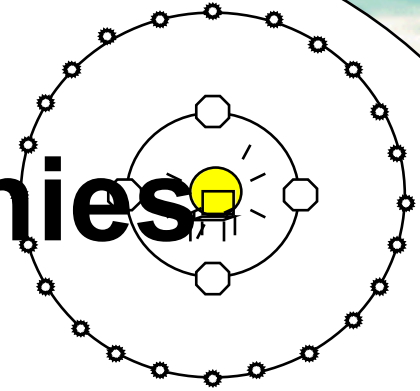


# Chariot Theophanies



- **Instances: Isa. 66:15; Hab. 3:8; Dan. 7:9-10; 2 Kings 2:11-12; 6:17; Ps. 68:17(18), 4(5), 33(34); Deut. 33:26; Isa. 19:1; Ps. 65:11.**
- **Poetic, context of judgment.**
- **God going to war.**

# Court Theophanies



- **Instances: 1 Kings 22:19-22; Isa. 6:1-5; Job 1:6; 2:1; Dan. 7:9-10; Ps. 82; 89:5-14.**
- **With a Man in the center.**
- **Connected with chariot through 1 Chron. 28:18, where chariot = cherubim (court ministers).**

# Individual Man Theophanies



- **Instances: Judg. 13:6-22; Gen. 18; Dan. 10:5; Rev. 10:1(?); Acts 9:3-7; Dan. 7:13; Rev. 19:11; etc.**
- **Second type of Man theophany.**
- **Some are preincarnate appearances of Christ.**

# Warrior Theophanies



- **Instances: Zech. 9:14-15; 14:3-5; Hab. 3:3-15; Isa. 63:1-6; 59:17-19; Zeph. 3:17; Josh. 5:13-15.**
- **A third type of Man theophany.**

# Glory Theophanies

- **Instances: Isa. 60:1-2; Mal. 4:2; Ps. 80:1, 3, 7, 19; 94:1.**
- **Connected with thunderstorm and temple theophanies.**

# Fire Theophanies

- **Exod. 3:1-6; Gen. 15:17; Exod. 13:21; 14:19, 24; Num. 9:15-23; Acts 2:1-3**
- **Connected with thunderstorm and glory theophanies**

# Temple/cloud Theophanies

- **Instances: Exod. 40:34-38; Num. 9:15-23; Deut. 4:32-36; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Ezek. 8:4; 10:3-4, 18-19; 43:2-7; 44:4.**
- **Connected with dedication of the tabernacle or temple, or speech from the temple.**

# Creation as Theophany

- **Instances: Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:1-4; 93:1-2; 102:25-26. Building: Job 38:4-11; Prov. 8:27-31; Amos 9:5-6.**
- **Connected with temple theophanies, Ps. 78:69; 93:5; 11:4-5.**

# Summary of OT Theophany

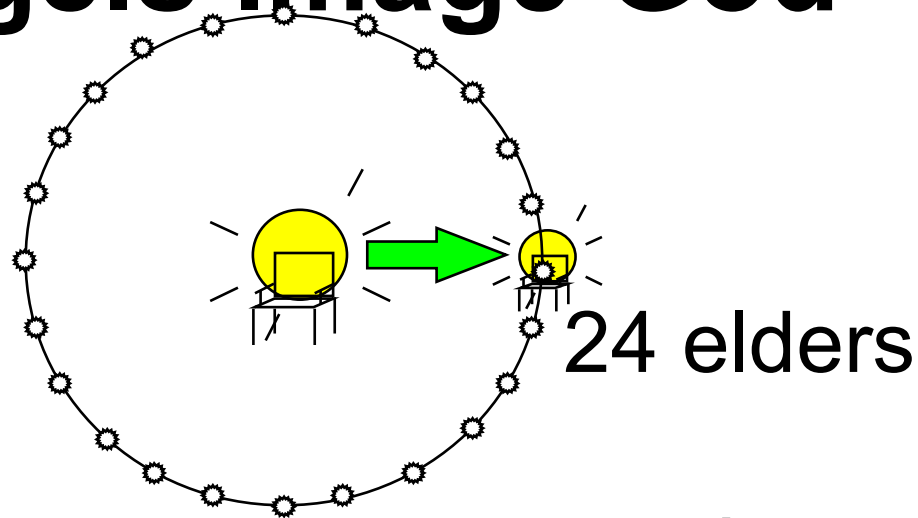
- **Diverse, showing richness.**
- **Interrelated, showing unity and mystery.**
- **Classifiable up to a point.**

Showing  
God's wisdom.



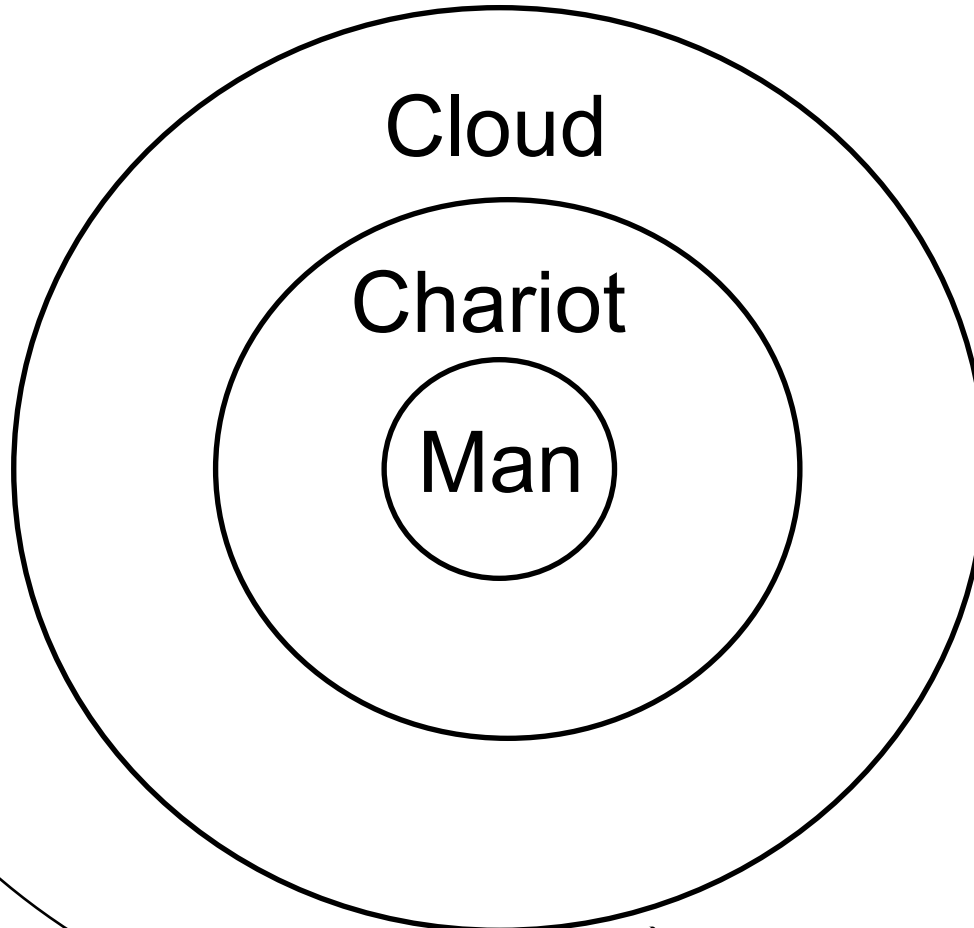
## **D.** Imaging in Theophanies

# Angels Image God

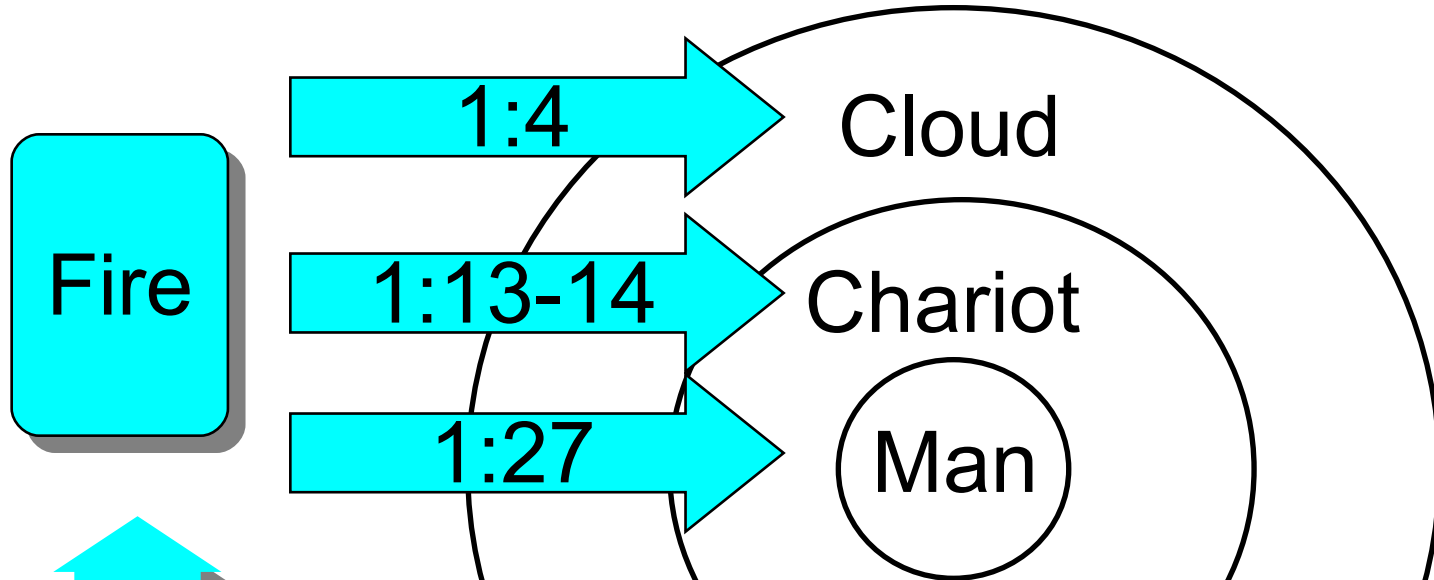


- **24 thrones image one throne (Rev. 4:4).**
- **Angels are “sons of God” (Job 1:6; 2:1).**
- **They execute God’s decrees (Isa. 6:6-7; Ezek. 9:4; 10:2; Ps. 103:20-21).**

# 3 Layers in Ezekiel 1



# Fire Imaging in Ezekiel 1



↑  
meaning:  
God's judgment  
(Isa. 66:15; Ps. 97:3)

# Imaging in Ezekiel 1

**Bronze**

**Voice**

● 1:4

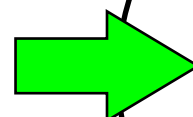
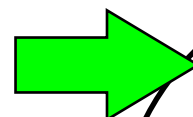
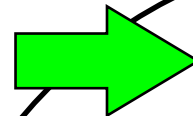
9:3-4

● 1:7

1:24

● 1:27; 8:2?

1:25,28



Cloud

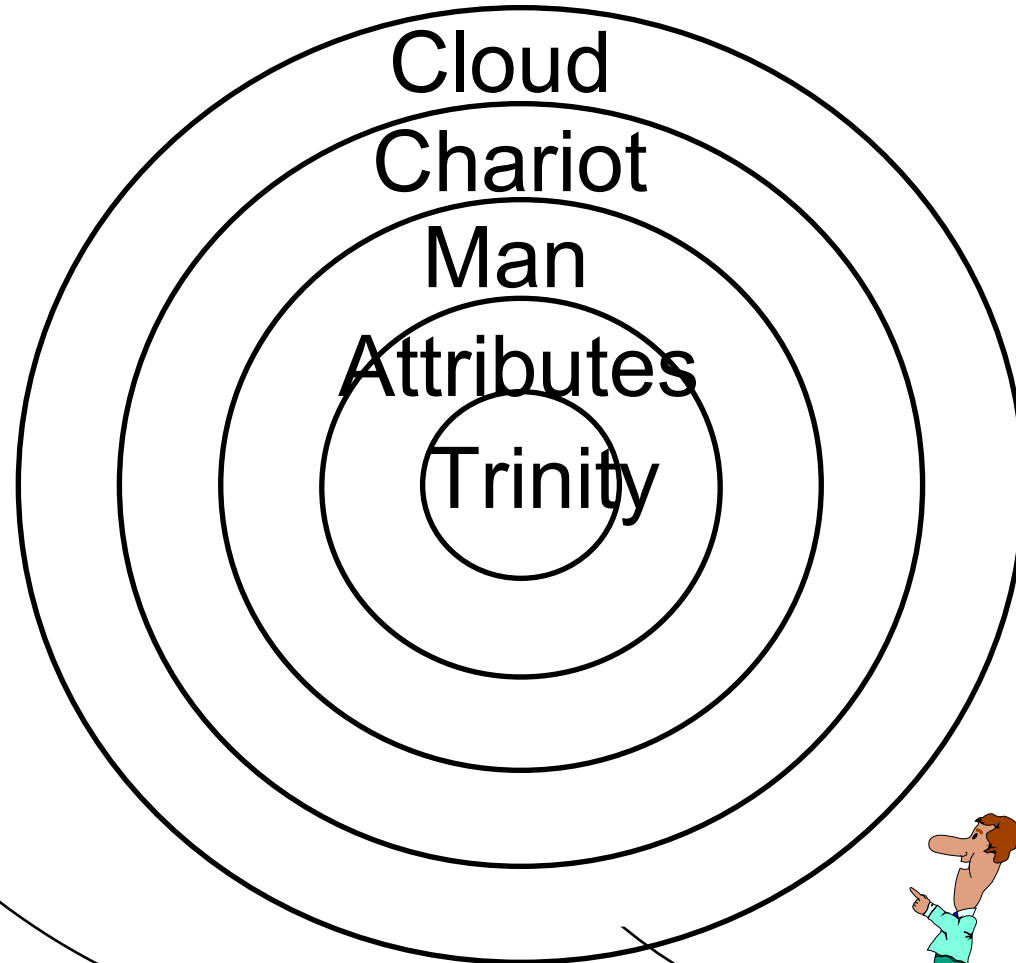
Chariot

Man

meaning: firmness of judgment

pronounce judgment

# Inner Meaning of Man Theophany



deep



# Attributes in Human Form

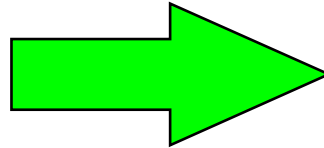
- **Eyes**      ● Knowledge, Prov. 15:3; 2 Chron. 16:9; Ps. 80:14; Jer. 32:19; Ps. 11:4.
- **Ears**      ● Answering prayer, Ps. 34:15.
- **Arm**      ● Power, Luke 1:51; Ps. 44:3.
- **Hand**      ● Care, Isa. 49:2; Ezek. 8:1; 37:1.
- **Feet**      ● Dominion, Isa. 60:13; 63:3.
- **Face**      ● Presence, Exod. 33:9-11, 18-23.
- **Nostrils** ● Wrath, Ps. 18:15, 8.
- **Mouth**    ● Articulate speech.

# Attributes and Spirit

- **Face** ● Ps. 139:7; 51:11; Ezek. 39:29
- **Eyes** ● Rev. 5:6; 1:4-5.
- **Hand** ● Ezek. 8:1 vs. 11:5.
- **Finger** ● Luke 11:20 vs. Matt. 12:28; 2 Cor. 3:3.
- **Breath** ● Ps. 18:15; Ezek. 37 (Ps. 104:3)
- **Power** ● Luke 1:35.
- **Many** ● Exod. 14:24; 15:6, 8, 12; Isa. 63:10-14.

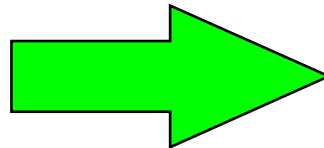
# Attributes and Trinity

Individual  
attributes



Holy  
Spirit

Whole human  
figure



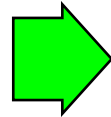
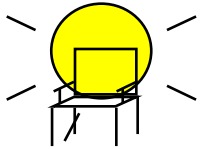
Christ  
Incarnate



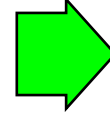
**E. Imaging and Spatial Structure**

# Kingship Reflected

God



angelic  
court



heaven  
and earth

image

Adam

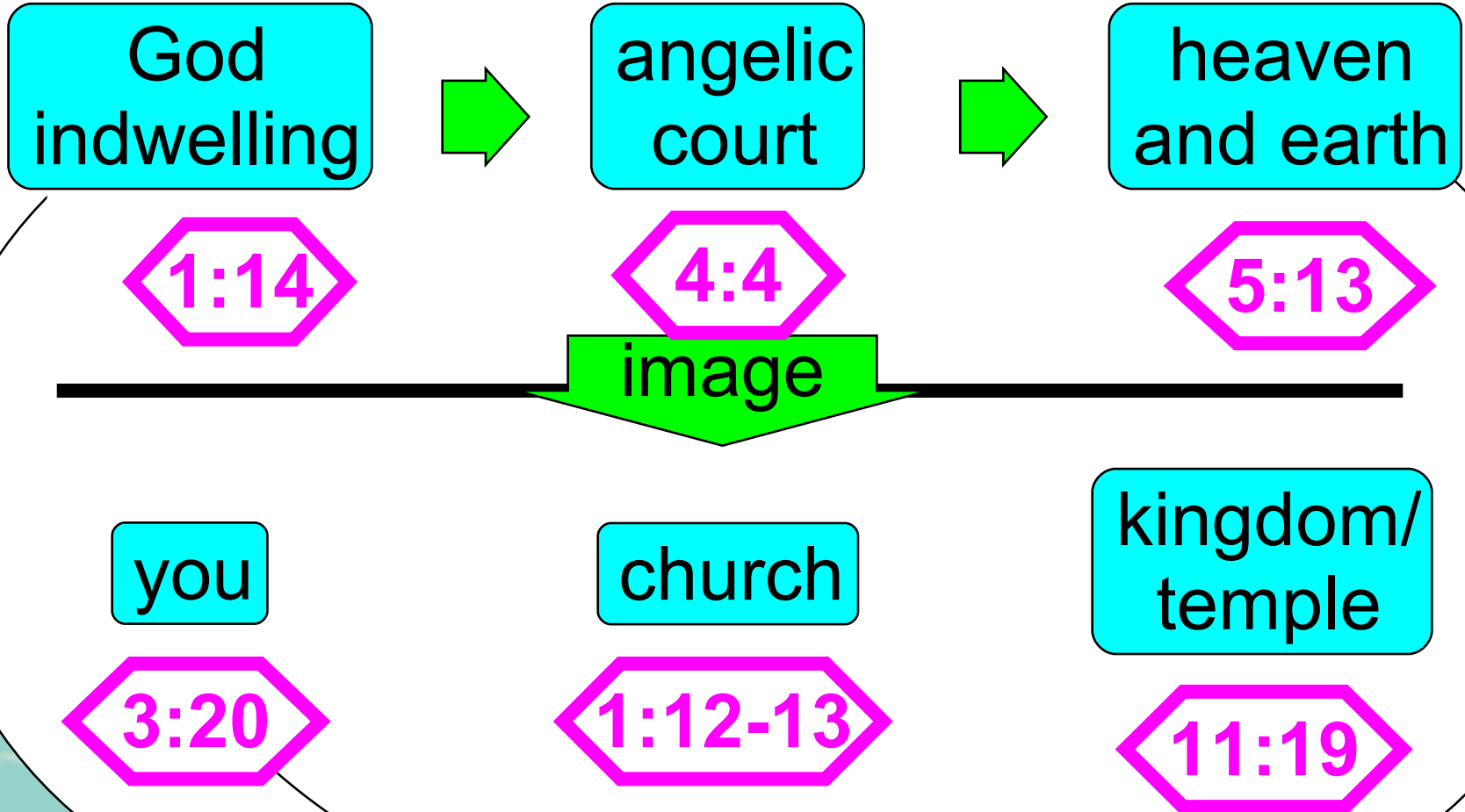


other  
people

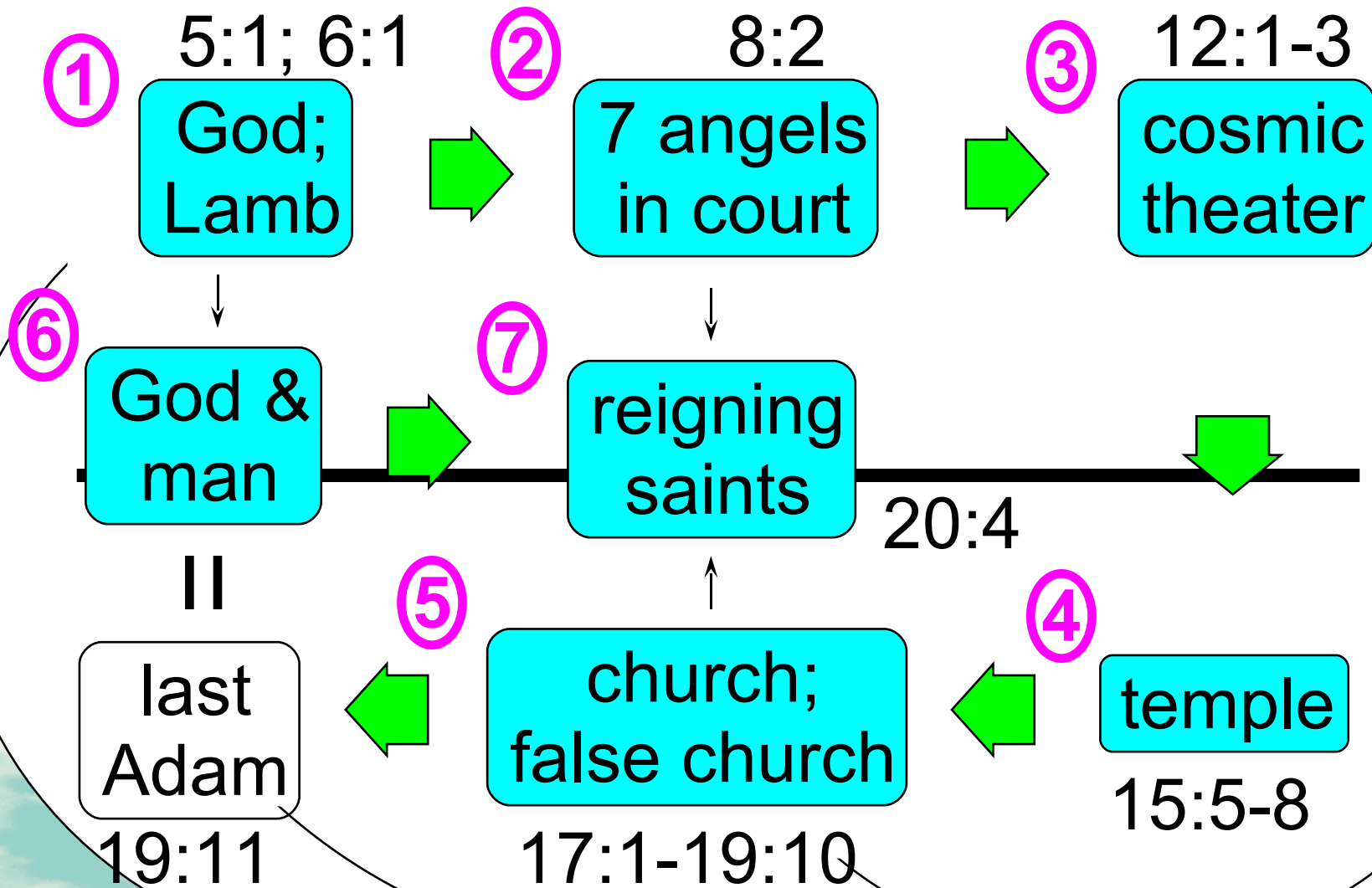
Eden

earth

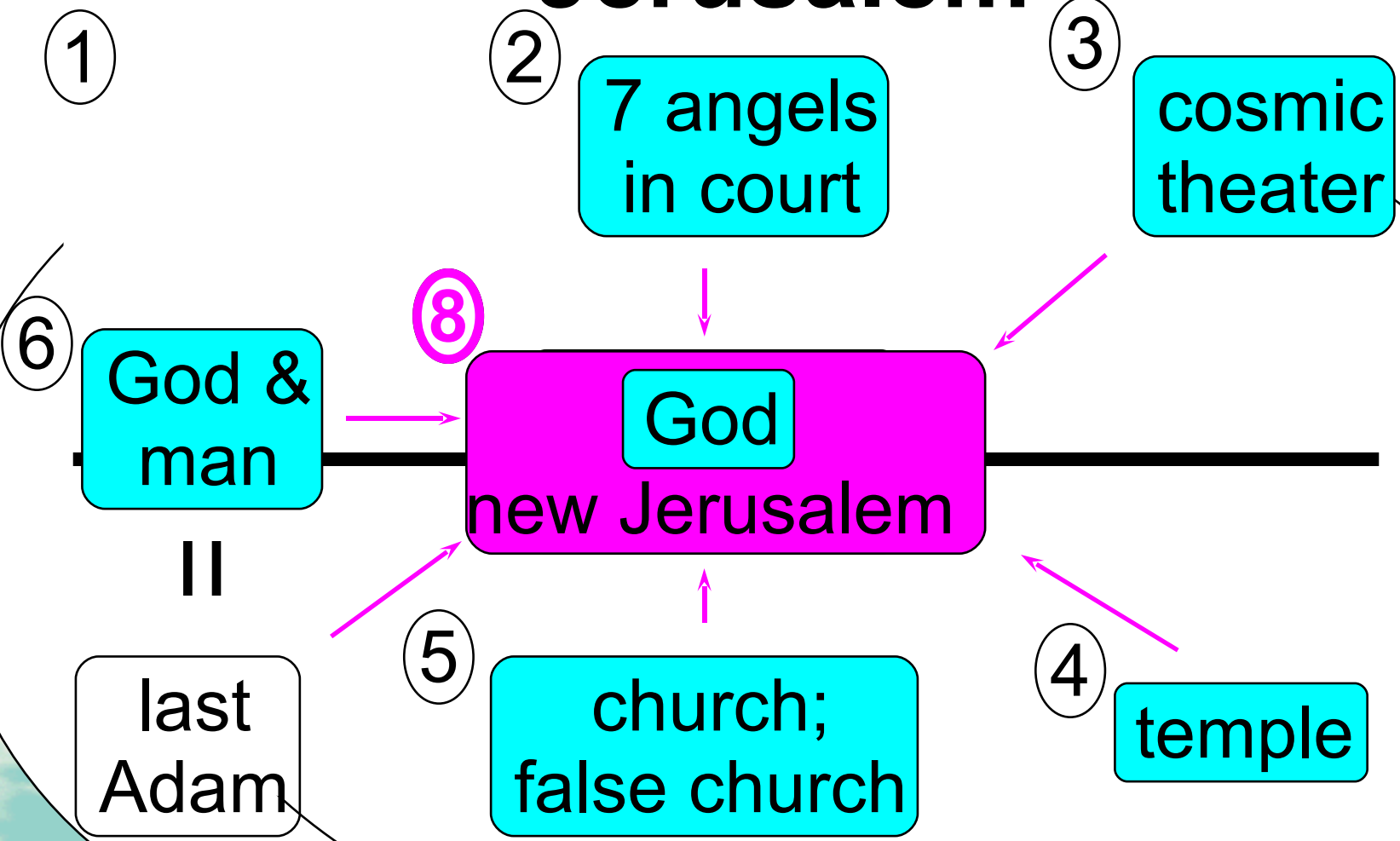
# Presence Reflected



# 7 Cycles Follow Reflection



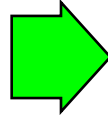
# Final Reflection: New Jerusalem



# Completed Reflection

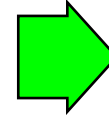
God  
indwelling

22:1



angelic  
court

21:12



heaven  
and earth

21:23

---

you

22:4

church

1:12-13

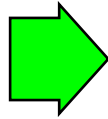
kingdom

21:16

# Beauty Reflected

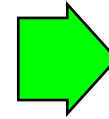
God

Rev. 4:3;  
splendor



angelic  
court

Ezek. 1:16



heaven  
and earth

Rev.  
21:19-21

---

you

Exod.  
28:15-21

church

Isa. 61:10;  
62:3

kingdom

Rev.  
21:19-21



# **G. Lessons from Theophany**

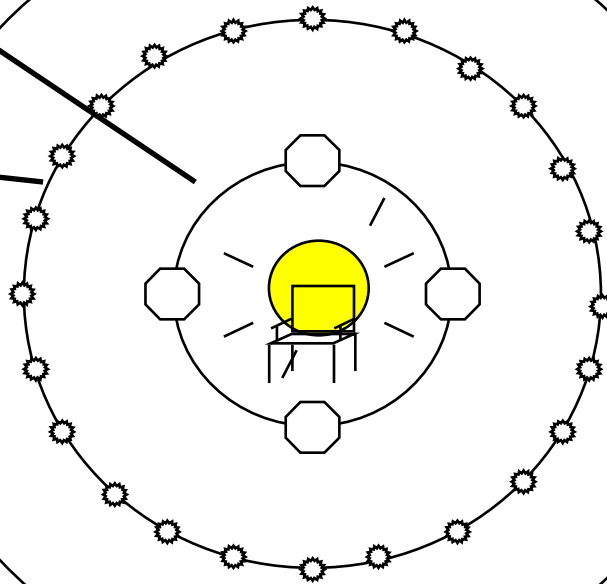
# God Centered Universe

4 living creatures

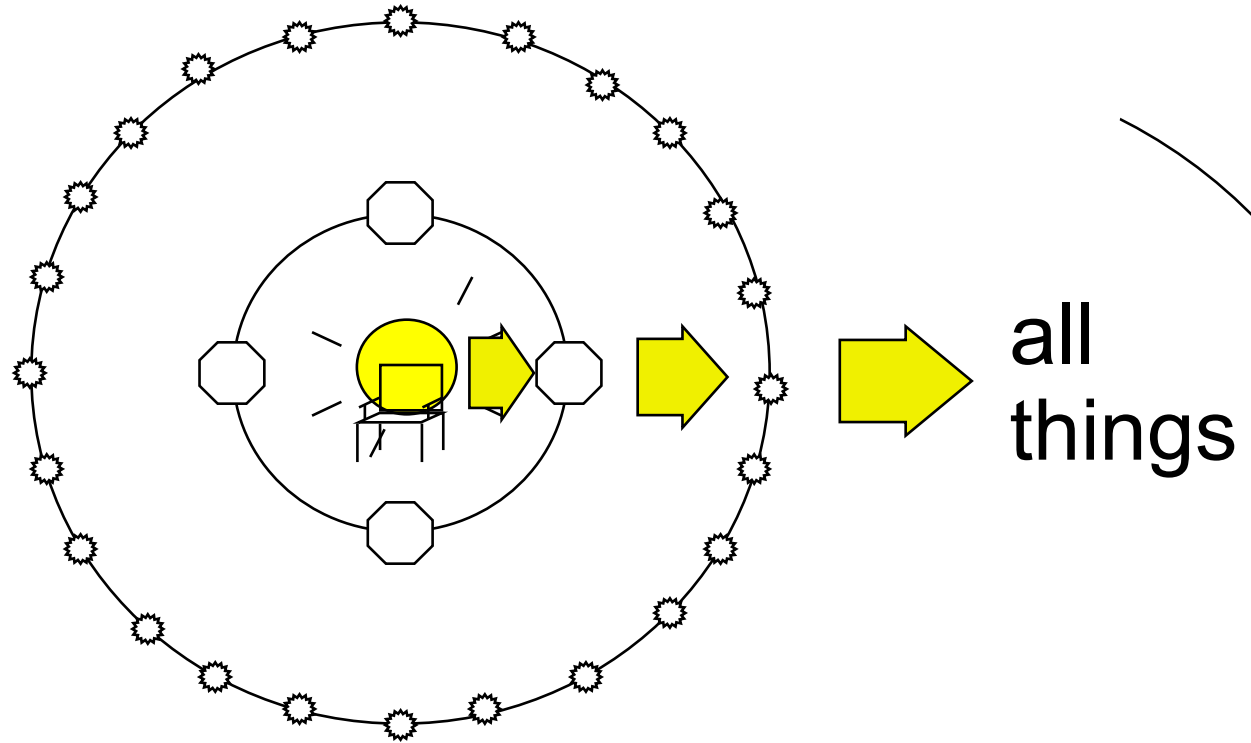
24 elders

myriads of angels

every creature  
in heaven, earth,  
under the earth, sea



# God's Glory in History



Unstoppable.

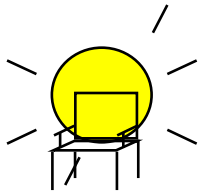


spread of glory

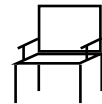
# God's Glory Copied

reality

man-centered  
thinking



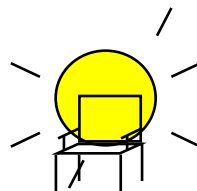
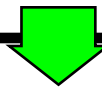
original  
King



literal  
human king



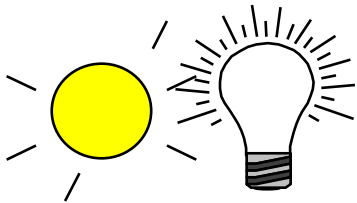
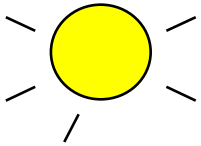
copy  
king



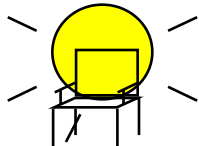
God as merely  
metaphorical  
King

# God's Glory Reflected

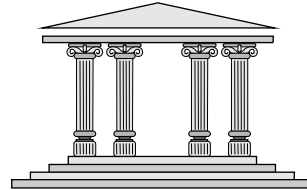
light



kingship



presence

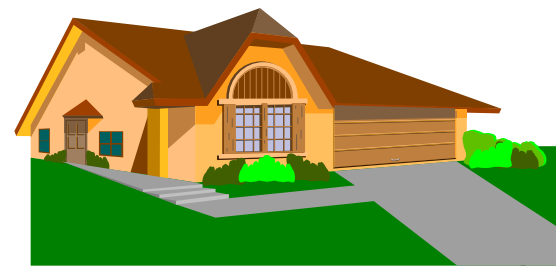
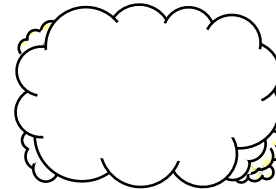
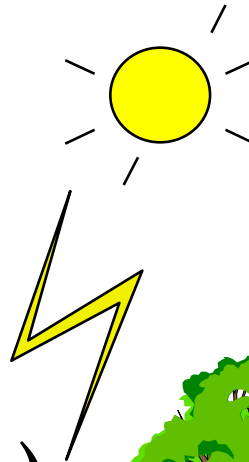
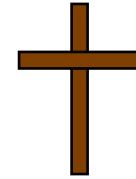


beauty

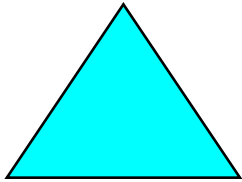


# God's Glory Now

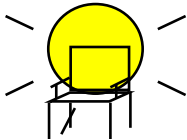
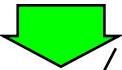
- In redemption, 5:2-6
- In creation, 4:11
  - ◆ Light
  - ◆ Cloud
  - ◆ Thunder
  - ◆ Trees (life)
  - ◆ Houses



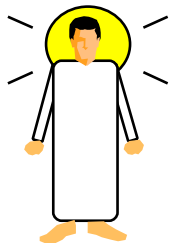
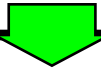
# God's Mystery Reflected in Symbols



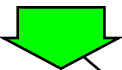
God's Trinitarian nature



God's appearing in Rev.



God's surroundings



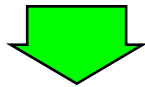
all of Revelation

# Evangelism from Theophany

- Don Richardson, *Peace Child*, illustrates the challenges.
- You may start from general revelation: water, trees, the sun, marriage, power (kingship).

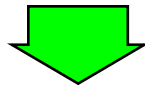
# Worship from Theophany

Seeing God in majesty



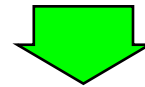
Praise

4:8



Awe

1:17



Imitation

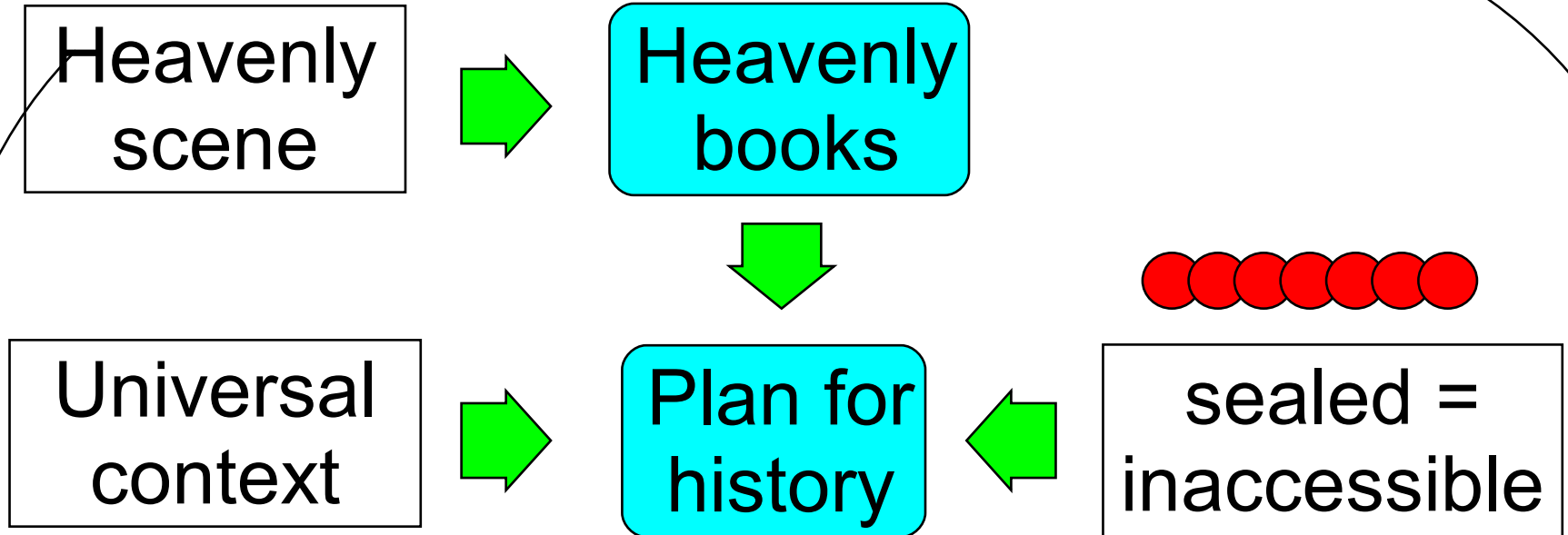
2 Cor. 3:18

# **H. The Lamb and the Scroll**



# God's Scroll

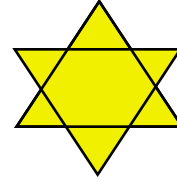
- Heavenly books contain God's **plans**,  
Dan. 10:21; 12:4, 9; (8:26)



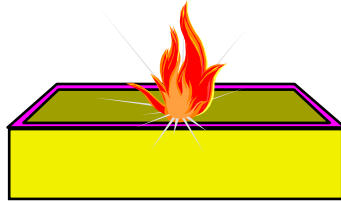
**Who can bring God's plan to realization?**

# The Lamb's Ability (5:5-6)

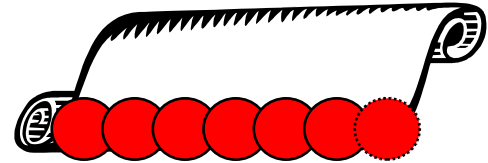
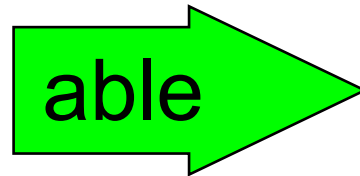
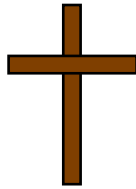
● **Lion, Root of David**



● **Lamb**



● **Slain**



● **With Spirit**

