

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Lesson 3

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Beginning in Rev 4, John's epistle moves to future events by first giving John a vision of heaven in Rev 4 and 5. This marks an important transition from the "church age" ("the things that are" 1:19) to future end time events ("the things that will take place" 1:19). The scene shifts from matters concerning the church to a dramatic scene in heaven. The church is not mentioned again in the book of Revelation chapters 4-19. Many think the Lord's promise to spare His church from the intense hour of testing (3:10) means the church will have been "raptured" before that time of tribulation described in chapters 6-19.

Read Revelation 4-6.

1. Notice John's use of similes in his attempt to describe the scene in heaven. The *throne* of God is the theme of chapter 4 as it is mentioned eleven times. Compare John's description to Isaiah 6:1, Ezekiel 1:26-28, Dan 7:9-10, and 1 Kings 22:19.
2. Make an attempt to identify the different persons seen in heaven in chapter 4-5. What N.T. institution was governed by elders (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5), promised to reign in heaven (Rev 3:21), rewarded with white garments (Rev 3:5), and crowns (Rev 2:10, 2 Tim 4:8)? Who are the four living creatures of Ezekiel 1:5, 10:15; 2 Sam 6:2, Isa 37:16? Who is the Lamb, the Lion of Judah and the Root of David (Isa 53:7, John 1:29, Rev 22:16, Heb 7:14)?
3. What do all these characters do in heaven unceasingly (Rev 4:8-11, 5:9-10, 12-13)? The average Christian spends less than one hour a week praising and worshipping God; how much time does the average American spend? Contrast what might be going on on earth as this is going on in heaven by reviewing this week's newspapers.
4. What important object is seen by John in Rev 5:1? What problem caused John to weep (5:4)? Who is the only person found righteous and worthy who has the right to open the book and break the seals (5:5)?

