

Lesson 8
Revelation 4

Come, Let Us Adore Him!

Memory verse: "The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all."
Psalms 103:19 (NKJV)

John was not carried mystically into some never-never land of fantasy. He was carried spiritually into the ever-ever land of heaven with only a slight foothold in time and space to see what human eyes could not see and hear what human ears could not hear. The Lord says, "I want you to come up here because I want to show you some things that must take place after these things." After the time of the church there are some things that are going to happen and the Lord is to show him what they are.

The first vision was the apocalypse of Jesus Christ, or the revealing, or the unveiling of Jesus Christ, ministering in His church in the great vision of chapter 1. Now we have the second of his visions, it is a vision of heaven. And he as in the case of the first vision was to write it down.

There may be a lot to see in heaven. But nothing compares to the throne of God. And nothing compares to the Lamb of God in chapter 5. And so, the focus of the trip to heaven is on the throne and the one who sits on it and on the Lamb of God. As the chapter begins we are drawn into the vision and suddenly we become face to face with the ineffable majesty Himself.

You will notice in chapter 4 verse 1, twice the phrase "after this," once at the beginning of the verse and once at the end of the verse. "After this," says John, "I looked." What did he just experience, "after this"? He experienced the tremendous vision of Christ in chapter 1 and then the giving of the seven letters for the churches in chapters 2 and 3. After this experience of seeing Christ ministering to His church and getting the Word of Christ for His churches, "after this, I looked". So he's simply giving us somewhat of a personal chronology and saying, "After having experienced the first three chapters, I now have experienced what I am about to write."

The phrase "after this" at the end of the verse is a bit different. "Come up here and I will show you what must take place after this." In other words, you have here not John's chronology but God's chronology. John is telling us when he says "after this" that after the things I just experienced then I experienced this. God is saying to him, or the voice is saying to him, "After this you have just written about, will come these things." That is a very important transition point.

The phrase "after this" is used throughout the book of Revelation to mark the beginning of a new vision. Frequently it is used, "after this," with the word "I saw," or "I looked," chapter 7, chapter 15, chapter 18, chapter 19. In each case it introduces a new vision, or a new section of the book as the scene shifts.

Heaven is a place of worship, and God's people shall worship Him throughout all eternity. Perhaps it would be good for us to get in practice now! A study of Revelation 4 and 5 will certainly help us better understand how to worship God and give Him the glory that He deserves.

True spiritual worship is perhaps one of the greatest needs in our individual lives and in our churches. There is a constant emphasis today on witnessing for Christ and working for Christ, but not enough is said about worshipping Him. To *worship* means "to ascribe worth" (see Rev. 4:11; 5:12). It means to use all that we are and have to praise God for all that He is and does.

If Revelation 1:19 is God's inspired outline of this book, then Revelation 4 ushers us into the third division: "the things which shall be hereafter." In fact, that is exactly what God said to John when He summoned him to heaven! It would appear that, in this experience, John illustrates what will happen to God's people when the church age has run its course: heaven will open; there will be a voice and the sound of a trumpet; and the saints will be caught up to heaven (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:13–18). Then, God's judgment of the earth can begin.

But before God pours out His wrath, He gives us a glimpse into glory and permits us to hear the worshipping creatures in heaven as they praise God.

Things to learn: 1) God on the Throne in Heaven 2) The Significance of the throne in Heaven 3) Worship of God who is on His Throne.

Discussion questions:

Q1 Who is on the throne that John saw in heaven and what is its significance?

Q2 What did John see around, out of and before the throne (in verses 3b to 8a)? You would like to explain the implications of those sightings by John.

Q3 How would this chapter help you in your worship of the Creator God (look at verses 8b to 11 to help you)?